CITY HILIGHTS

The Truth Speaks

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FSSAI targets misleading food labels, serves notices P9

Rahul's 19-ball blitz stuns head coach Gautam Gambhir P12

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No guarantee scheme will be discontinued, says D.K Shivakumar

Chief Minister assures beneficiaries welfare programmes will continue without interruption

BENGALURU

Karnataka Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar on Sunday categorically stated that the Congress government's flagship guarantee schemes, including Gruhalakshmi and Gruhajyoti, will continue without any interruption, dismissing speculation about their possible discontinuation.

In a media statement, Shivakumar urged citizens not to believe rumours being spread by opposition parties regarding the future of the welfare programmes, which he described as the pride of the Congress government.

The Chief Minister clarified that the ongoing exercise seeking fresh applications from beneficiaries is aimed solely at verifying records and preventing misuse of public funds. According to him, authorities have detected cases where individuals allegedly created fake documents in the names of deceased persons and opened bank accounts to fraudulently avail benefits under the schemes. He said the government is conducting a verification drive to confirm beneficiaries' names, addresses and bank account details to ensure that assistance reaches only genuine recipients.

Shivakumar stressed that the verification process should not be misconstrued as a move to withdraw or curtail any welfare initiative.

The Chief Minister reiterated that the guarantee programmes remain central to the government's welfare agenda and have benefited millions of families across Karnataka. He assured beneficiaries that the schemes would continue as promised and that the government remains committed to delivering social security and financial assistance to eligible households.

"All guarantee schemes will continue 100 per cent. There is absolutely no reason for anyone to worry or believe false rumours."
—D.K. Shivakumar, CM

Congress defends Gruha Lakshmi scheme, targets BJP

Congress leader Ramesh Babu earlier defended Karnataka's Gruha Lakshmi scheme and criticised BJP leader R. Ashoka for allegedly misleading the public. He said such remarks were creating unnecessary confusion among beneficiaries and reiterated that the welfare programme remains fully operational under the state government.

Karnataka Guarantee Schemes

Gruhalakshmi
Financial assistance to women heads of households

Gruhajyoti
Free electricity benefits for eligible consumers

Verification drive
Underway to authenticate beneficiary details

Objective
Prevent fraudulent claims and ensure transparency

Govt assurance
100% continuation of all guarantee schemes

Why beneficiaries are being asked to reapply

The state government clarified that the fresh application process is not linked to the discontinuation of any guarantee scheme. Officials are seeking updated details to verify the identity of beneficiaries after reports of fraudulent claims involving fake documents and bank accounts. The exercise is intended to confirm names, addresses and account numbers, ensuring that benefits are delivered only to genuine recipients. The government has assured that no eligible beneficiary will lose benefits because of the verification process and that all guarantee schemes will continue as announced.

India offers vast opportunities in innovation: Modi

NICE/NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday highlighted India's emergence as a leading global destination for investment and innovation, saying the country offers immense opportunities across technology, manufacturing, startups and emerging sectors.

Addressing investors and venture capital leaders at the Bharat Innovates 2026 event in Nice, France, Modi said India's growth story is powered by talent, scale, stability and reform, making it one of the world's most attractive investment destinations.

The Prime Minister emphasized that the current decade is marked by both disruption and development, with global challenges such as conflicts and climate change creating new opportunities for innovation. He urged global investors to partner with India in shaping the next wave of technological and economic transformation.

Modi identified artificial intelligence, quantum computing, biotechnology, space technology and advanced materials as key sectors that will define the future.

He stressed that India's approach is centered on "technology for humanity," ensuring innovation remains inclusive, trusted and focused on global good.

He also highlighted India's success in building a robust digital public infrastructure ecosystem and said human-centric innovation remains at the core of the country's development strategy.

- **Event:** Bharat Innovates 2026
- **Venue:** Nice, France
- **Focus Areas:** AI, Quantum Computing, Biotechnology, Space Technology, Advanced Materials
- **Message:** Invest, innovate and co-create with India
- **Key Strengths:** Talent, Scale, Stability and Reforms

Emmanuel Macron congratulates Modi on record tenure

NICE : French President Emmanuel Macron on Sunday congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi on becoming India's longest-serving Prime Minister since Independence, calling it a reflection of his determination and the nation's strength. Speaking at the inauguration of Bharat Innovates 2026 in Nice, Macron said France was proud to host Modi and praised his leadership. "This long run says a lot about your determination and the strength of your country," he said.

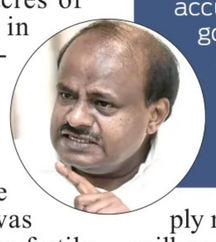
"India's growth is powered by talent, scale, stability and reform, making it an attractive destination for investment and innovation."
—Narendra Modi, PM

HDK alleges govt–real estate nexus in Bidadi Township project

MANDYA

Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel H.D. Kumaraswamy on Sunday launched a scathing attack on Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar over the proposed Bidadi Township project, alleging a nexus between the Congress government and real estate interests.

Addressing reporters in Mandya, Kumaraswamy described Shivakumar as a "real estate king" and questioned the growth of his assets, claiming that a person who owned only three acres of ancestral property in 1999 had declared assets worth around ₹1,400 crore by 2018.



The Union Minister alleged that the state government was attempting to acquire fertile agricultural land for the benefit of private developers. He claimed that many farmers were unwilling to part with their land and accused authorities of using pressure tactics to secure consent.

Kumaraswamy said Karnataka has vast stretches of non-irrigated land suitable for township development and questioned why productive farmland around Bidadi had been chosen. He highlighted that farmers in the region supply nearly six lakh litres of milk every month to Bengaluru dairies, underscoring the area's agricultural importance.

Referring to the Bengaluru-Mysuru Infrastructure Corridor project, he alleged that large-scale land acquisition over the years had ultimately benefited private interests. He also challenged the Congress to make public the findings of an earlier fact-finding committee that examined township projects initiated during his tenure as Chief Minister.

HDK questions asset growth

During the interaction, Kumaraswamy questioned the growth of Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar's declared assets, claiming that his holdings had increased from three acres of ancestral property in 1999 to assets worth approximately ₹1,400 crore by 2018. The Union Minister said the Chief Minister should explain how such wealth was accumulated and accused the Congress government of working closely with real estate interests in promoting the Bidadi Township proposal.

FM cites GDP growth, welfare gains and investments nationwide

'Viksit Bharat' gathering in B'luru sees Sitharaman defend economy

BENGALURU

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday asserted that India continues to be the world's fastest-growing major economy, dismissing criticism from the Opposition and highlighting the Centre's economic and welfare achievements over the past 12 years.

Addressing the BJP's 'Viksit Bharat' programme in Bengaluru, Sitharaman said economic indicators and international institutions validate India's growth story despite global uncertainties and geopolitical tensions.

"Even amidst global crises and disruptions, India continues to move forward as the world's fastest-growing major economy."
—Nirmala Sitharaman, FM

She took a swipe at Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, accusing him of repeatedly portraying a bleak picture of the Indian economy.

"Quarter after quarter, year after year, India has been the fastest-growing economy. This is not a claim made by the government alone; GDP numbers and international agencies confirm it," Sitharaman said.

The minister noted that the International Monetary Fund has also recognised India as the world's fastest-growing major economy. She argued that repeated criticism could create a misleading perception about the country's economic condition among citizens.

Referring to ongoing tensions in West Asia and disruptions around the Strait of Hormuz, Sitharaman said India had successfully navigated global challenges affecting energy supplies, shipping and insurance costs.

"Despite these global headwinds, the Narendra Modi government has ensured uninterrupted supplies of petroleum products and maintained economic stability," she said.

India Growth & Welfare Snapshot

- India Growth & Welfare Snapshot
- 58 crore Jan Dhan accounts opened
- 144 crore Aadhaar identities issued
- 125 crore mobile connections
- Nearly 12 crore household toilets constructed
- UPI emerges as a global digital payments model

Sitharaman reviews expressway progress

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman inspected the ongoing construction of the Dobbaspet-Chennai Expressway in Bengaluru Rural district on Sunday and reviewed road development, traffic management and infrastructure works. Accompanied by Karnataka BJP president B. Y. Vijayendra, MP K. Sudhakar and officials, she directed authorities to ensure timely completion of the project while maintaining quality standards.

14 pilgrims killed as vehicle plunges into well in Pandharpur

PANDHARPUR

At least 14 devotees were killed and several others injured after a pickup vehicle carrying pilgrims plunged into a roadside well in Maharashtra's Pandharpur on Sunday, officials said.

According to preliminary reports, the vehicle was transporting a group of devotees when the driver allegedly lost control. The vehicle veered off the road and fell into a nearby well, trapping several passengers inside.

Rescue teams, police personnel and local residents rushed to the accident site and launched a rescue operation. Multiple bodies were recovered from the well, while injured passengers were pulled out and shifted to nearby hospitals for treatment.

Authorities are continuing rescue and recovery efforts and are investigating the exact cause of the accident. Officials said further details would emerge after a detailed inquiry.

Pandharpur, one of Maharashtra's most prominent pilgrimage centres, attracts thousands of devotees throughout the year, particularly during religious events and temple visits. The tragedy has cast a shadow over the pilgrimage town, with local authorities focusing on relief and rescue measures.

Sonam Wangchuk, Prakash Raj back CJP protest in B'luru

BENGALURU

The Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) on Sunday organised a protest at Freedom Park in Bengaluru, drawing activists, students and public figures, including social activist Sonam Wangchuk, CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke and actor Prakash Raj. The demonstration was part of a nationwide campaign demanding the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over alleged irregularities in NEET and concerns regarding the education system.

Addressing the gathering, Wangchuk said the country was facing a "trust deficit" and stressed the need for an education system that inspires confidence among students and parents.

Prakash Raj, who joined the protest, praised Wangchuk's contributions to education and social causes, remarking that he wished "Sonam Wangchuk was our Education Minister."

Dipke and other speakers accused authorities of failing to address concerns over examination transparency and student welfare.

Protesters carried placards and raised slogans calling for accountability and reforms in the education sector.

The event was held under tight security and attracted participants from different parts of Karnataka. Organisers said similar demonstrations had already been conducted in several cities across the country.

BEIRUT STRIKE FALLOUT

Peace deal unlikely after Beirut strike: Iran

TEHRAN/BEIRUT

A proposed peace agreement between the United States and Iran faced fresh uncertainty on Sunday after Iran questioned Washington's commitment following an Israeli strike on Hezbollah targets in Beirut's southern suburbs. The development came despite diplomatic efforts by mediators seeking to finalize a framework agreement aimed at easing regional tensions.

Iranian Parliament Speaker and chief negotiator Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf said the United States lacked both the will and ability to fulfill its commitments, suggesting that continuing negotiations would be difficult if military actions by Israel persisted. His remarks followed Israel's announcement that it had carried out a precision strike on a Hezbollah command centre in Beirut's Dahiyeh district. The latest escalation has complicated diplomatic momentum generated by mediation efforts involving Qatar and Pakistan. While US President Donald Trump and Pakistani officials had expressed optimism that an agreement could be formalised soon, Tehran maintained that key political, legal and technical aspects of the proposed deal were still under review.

US-Iran Peace Talks

- Qatar and Pakistan acting as mediators
- Draft deal reportedly under review in Tehran
- Focus on nuclear limits and sanctions relief
- Strait of Hormuz security part of discussions

Regional Tensions

- Israel struck Hezbollah targets in Beirut
- Hezbollah-linked drone incidents reported
- Israel raised national alert level
- Iran questions US commitment to peace process

QUICK READ

Rangoli is a symbol of Indian culture: GP President

CH NEWS, Bengaluru
Women in their daily lives in urban areas get up in the morning and draw Rangoli, which is a symbol of Indian culture, said former Ramo Halli Gram Panchayat President G Mahesh. Speaking at a Rangoli for Women programme organized by MLA ST Somashekhar at the Sri Anjaneya Swamy Temple in Valagerahalli, Shivana Palya ward of Yeshwanthpur assembly constituency as part of World Women's Day, he said that he had got a good opportunity to meet people through the Rangoli competition with the slogan "Let the future of the people of Yeshwanthpur constituency be bright with Rangoli from house to house".At the same time, each women were given a plant. Shivana Palya ward President KY Krishna, Savita Mahesh. Kengeri Block Congress President Mailasandra Nagaraj, women's president Sangeetha, Sagar and others were present.

Suspecting infidelity, boyfriend slits Sikkim woman's throat

CH NEWS, Bengaluru
A 22-year-old woman from Sikkim, working as a receptionist at a salon in Bengaluru, was found murdered at her rented residence in Doddakannahalli, Bellandur, police said. The victim, identified as Ati Hangma Subba, was allegedly killed by her boyfriend, Purba Lepcha, a hotel waiter from Darjeeling. Police said the accused suspected her fidelity. Both had come to the city about a month ago in search of work. According to police, the incident took place early on Sunday morning after a heated argument between the two inside their house. The accused allegedly used a kitchen knife to slit the victim's throat. Police said an investigation

'Mukesh Sahni's arrest massacre of democracy'

CH NEWS, Bengaluru
VIP state unit President BK Mohan Kumar alleged that the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh has committed a massacre of democracy by arresting Mukesh Sahni, the founder of the Vikassheel Insaan Party. Speaking at a press conference, he said, if ordinary citizens question, they are threatened. Kamlesh Bind has been encountered. Although acts are being committed against leaders of the Nishad community, the minister there, Sanjay Nishad, is a puppet of the BJP and should resign immediately.If the BJP does not stop its atrocities against the Nishad and Koli communities, they will be taught a lesson in the elections.

Ricky Rai served notice over another viral Lamborghini stunt video

The latest controversy comes barely months after the same Lamborghini was embroiled in a high-profile drifting case.

CH NEWS,BENGALURU

A viral video clip showing a high-end Lamborghini bearing registration number KA05NR0009, allegedly owned by late underworld operator Muthappa Rai's son Ricky Rai, being driven at high speed on Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) Road while emitting loud exhaust noise and flames has triggered a police probe.

The video was uploaded on Instagram by the account 'rai_6600' on May 20. According to DCP (North Traffic) Jayaprakash, based on footage circulating on social media, Devanahalli traffic police have issued a notice to Ricky seeking an explanation on the matter.

The video purportedly shows the Lamborghini being driven while emitting modified exhaust sounds. In a dramatic display, flames can also be seen shooting out of the vehicle's exhaust, raising concerns over public safety and possible traffic violations.

The notice was served Saturday under Sections 52, 177, 184 and 190(2) of the Motor Vehicles Act, and Section 281 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.In

the notice, police stated that on May 20, at 12.09am, the vehicle was being driven in a dangerous and reckless manner on KIA Road, making extremely loud noises and endangering the life and safety of the public. The manner in which the vehicle was driven endangered public safety, created fear, anxiety and insecurity among road users, and violated legal rules governing driving on public roads, the notice added.

Ricky has been directed to appear before the authorities, along with the vehicle and relevant documents, within three days of receiving the notice and submit a written explanation. The notice warned that failure to appear within the stipulated period would result in appropriate legal action under applicable laws without further notice. A senior officer said Ricky explained over phone that the video was recorded when the car was heading towards Sadahalli toll plaza. He is said to have claimed that flames are emitted when the vehicle is driven at 10-15kmph and the accelerator is pressed suddenly as it picks up speed. Police asked him to submit his explanation in writing. On March 21, the luxury car was allegedly used for dangerous drifting stunts near MG Road.

Ricky initially denied involvement. However, CCTV footage established that he was driving the vehicle, following which an FIR was registered at Cubbon Park police station.

BSCC eyes vacant plots for parking

CH NEWS,BENGALURU

The Bengaluru South City Corporation (BSCC) is exploring the idea of using vacant plots near roads that witness heavy traffic for parking and other purposes.

Commissioner KN Ramesh has directed the officials to identify such land so that the corporation can get into an agreement with property owners.

"To reduce traffic congestion on high-traffic roads within the corporation limits, he instructed the engineers to identify vacant government or private lands adjacent to those roads and enter into agreements with their owners to arrange parking, construct bus bays, and footpaths," a statement by the corporation said.

GBA to plant 1 lakh saplings across city

GBA Forest Dept directs each corporation to plant 30,000 trees; to float tenders soon

CH NEWS,BENGALURU

The GBA Forest Department has taken such an important decision and has decided to plant about 80,000 to 1 lakh trees all over the city.

Among the trees that have already fallen in the city, Gulmohar, Spetodia, and Subabul trees are the most numerous. These trees were planted next to the road, which caused the problem of falling to the ground.

To prevent such incidents in the future, it has been decided to plant trees that will be useful to the residents of the city. The city's forest department has issued instructions to 5 municipalities and it has been decided to call tenders for the work of planting trees soon.

Planting trees during the rainy season helps them grow and thrive. Therefore, each corporation has been asked to plant 30,000 trees. Tenders will be called within the jurisdiction of the respective corporation and they will be planted, said officials of the corporation's forest department.

GBA Forest Department Deputy Conservator of Forests Sudarshan said, "It has been decided that Gul Mohar and Spetodia plants will not be planted on the roadsides from now on. These have been restricted to parks. Violet, Buguri and Honge plants will be planted on the roadsides. Buguri trees, which are widely used in Ayurveda for skin problems, will be grown.These plants will grow and start bearing fruit in a period of 10 to 15 years."

"Tenders will be called soon for planting these trees. All the corporations will be advised to plant 80,000 to 1 lakh trees."

'Plan afoot to dispose or reuse falled trees'

Steps have already been taken to transport 900 trees that have fallen across the city to one place. Tenders will be called soon and steps will be taken to dispose of the trees. Some trees will not be useful if they are in the rain for a long time. Therefore, only as many trees as can be sold will be sold. The remaining trees will remain in the depot, said GBA Forest Department Deputy Conservator of Forests Sudarshan.

Dialogue on promoting Quantum, Artificial Intelligence research

CH NEWS,BENGALURU

A dialogue was organised at Alliance University near Anekal town to promote Quantum, Artificial Intelligence and Deeptech research.

The dialogue brought together experts from various fields including science, academia, industry, research, cybersecurity, data science, autonomous mobility, entrepreneurship, and public policy.

Former NITI Aayog member V.K. Saraswat said, the country should prioritize using indigenous technology. The purpose of the National Quantum Mission is to use indigenous technology. Therefore, the youth should prioritize research. Industry and academia collaboration is the need of the day. Through this, students will get education and practical knowledge.

Gopika Chaganti, COO of Quantum AI Global, said, there is a need to develop scientific thinking among the youth. Researchers should do more quantum-type research. By adopting modern technology in their careers, they can achieve high achievements.

Alliance University Chancellor Abhay Chebbi, Vice Chancellor Presley Shan, Registrar General Surekha Shetty, and Raivita Bionex founder Aditya Locharla were present.

Delay in final seat matrix pushes CET counselling dates

CH NEWS,BENGALURU

The wait of Common Entrance Test (CET) aspirants continues as the date for counselling is still undecided with Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) awaiting the seat matrices of various courses.

While the Minister for Medical Education, Sharan Prakash Patil, had earlier announced that counselling would begin on June 10, KEA later postponed it and tentatively announced June 13 as the date. However, there is no clarity on when it is likely to begin now.

The issue stems from the fact that the final seat matrix for engineering has still not been approved by the Higher Education Department. After the draft seat matrix was announced, we have invited objections. The objections are being scrutinised now. We hope to release the final seat matrix before next Saturday, said an official from the higher education department. With no Minister handling the portfolio, the Chief Minister will have to approve the matrix. Sharan Prakash, who is also the co-chairman of KEA, said that he will be meeting DK Shivakumar soon regarding this matter.Meanwhile, KEA has received only the seat matrix of agriculture.

Seat matrices for nursing, pharmacy and other professional courses are yet to come. KEA released the verification slip required for admission. Candidates can download the verification slip at cetonline.karnataka.gov.in/ugcet_vs_2026, said KEA Executive Director, H Prasanna. This is the first stage of the seat allocation process, which will contain complete information about the candidates. The link to register options will be opened after the seat matrix is received from the govt, KEA stated in a press statement.

Meanwhile, Karnataka Unaided Private Engineering Colleges' Association has written to All India Council of Technical Education to extend the last date of counselling to September 15. Currently, it is until August 15.The association said it is difficult to complete the counselling as it has gone online since the COVID pandemic. The August 15 date was used based on a Supreme Court order issued in 2012, when the counselling process was held offline, the Association noted. The online process involves document verification, various stages of allotment, payment of tuition fees and admission at college level. It has therefore sought more time from AICTE to complete the process.

World Music Day: Entries invited from musicians

CH NEWS,BENGALURU

The Rangoli Metro Art Center (RMAC) at MG Road Metro Station has invited musicians and music lovers from across Bengaluru to participate in the World Music Day celebrations on June 21.

According to a press release issued by the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL), the event will provide an open platform for artists of all ages and musical genres to showcase their talent before a live audience.Performers representing Indian classical, Carnatic, Hindustani, Jazz, Blues, Pop, Rock, Folk, Fusion and Contemporary music are encouraged to take part in the day-long programme.

The celebrations will be held from 10.30am to 7.30pm across multiple venues within the Rangoli Metro Art Center, including its 120-seat auditorium and open-air performance spaces.

A major attraction will be Bengaluru's popular Community Drum Jam, led by noted musicians Vasundhara Das and Roberto Narain.

Entry to the event is free. Musicians interested in performing can register by emailing at rangoli@bmrc.co.in with details of their performance, genre and duration.

Registrations can also be completed in person at RMAC between 11am and 5pm. Performance slots will be allotted on a first-come, first-served basis, subject to availability.

Registrations will close at 5 pm on June 19.

For further information, participants may contact the administration office on 080-22969265.

Drinking age stays 21 at K'taka pubs: Minister

CH NEWS,BENGALURU

If you are heading out for a drink this weekend or later, relax. You don't have to hand over your identification cards to pub owners or let them scan and store your personal data.

Clearing the air following panic and misinterpretation among party-goers and restaurateurs, Home Minister Priyank Kharge said there is absolutely no change in the state's legal drinking age or data collection rules. The minimum age for purchasing and consuming alcohol in Karnataka remains 21 years. The clarification came on the back of recent notifications targeting underage drinking, which some sections of the hospitality industry had misread as a blanket ban to log details of every single customer. Alcohol-serving establishments are not required to check and store the ID of every individual.

Kabini Zebra gives birth to a baby girl at Bannerghatta Biological Park

CH NEWS,BENGALURU

The birth a zebra and a narwhal in the Bannerghatta Biological Park has caused a stir.

The park's zebra Kabini gave birth to a cute baby girl. The water buffalo Drushya gave birth to a baby girl. Both the babies are healthy and are being carefully cared for by the park staff.

The zebra cub is agile and is moving around, drinking milk regularly and socializing with other zebras. With the arrival of the new guest, the number of zebras in the park has increased to 11. The staff is working hard to provide the zebra cub with natural behavior and a good environment, said AV Surya Sen, Executive Director of the park.

The baby narwhal Drishya is also very active and is always spending time with her mother. The Bannerghatta Park team is taking care of the baby and is creating a peaceful environment to reduce the stress on the baby. The baby narwhal is taking care of her baby with care.

Cheetahs brought from South Africa under an international animal exchange program are adapting to the Bannerghatta climate. The quarantine period ended last week and they are now available for public viewing.

During the quarantine period, the well-being of the leopards, including their environment, climate, health status, and feeding behaviour, was monitored.

After the quarantine period, the cheetahs are roaming around in their spacious outdoor habitat, offering a new experience to tourists.

Industrial sector recording significant growth: HDK

CH NEWS,BENGALURU

'The Central government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is encouraging industries with high production and employment generation rates. Due to this, the industrial sector is recording significant growth,' said Union Minister for Large Industries HD Kumaraswamy.

He was speaking while inaugurating the 65th foundation day celebrations of the city's Central Manufacturing Technology Institute (CMTI).

"After the Modi-led government came to power at the Centre, emphasis has been placed on industrial research. The work is to enhance the skills of engineering and diploma students. As a result, the performance of the manufacturing sector has increased and jobs are being created. The employability of the youth has increased due to the availability of skills," he said.

"CMTI also holds a significant place among the industrial prides of Bengaluru. CMTI, which started as a small organization, has now grown enormously. It is at the forefront in the country in the development of technology and equipment required not only for the space and defense sectors but also for small and micro industries. It is playing a significant role in the growth of industries. A proposal to expand CMTI is before the central government," he said.

UNSAFE ROADS

Hanging cable: Woman hurt as OFC snags scooter

CH NEWS,BENGALURU

What began as a routine ride home after a dental appointment ended in a devastating accident for 46-year-old Shaziya, who now faces months of recovery after a loose optical fibre cable allegedly snagged her scooter and threw her onto the road.

The incident occurred on the service road at Kalyan Nagar. Shaziya was returning home with her 17-year-old daughter when the cable suddenly became entangled with the scooter's handlebar, causing her to lose control and crash. "I don't know what happened. Suddenly the cable got caught in my handle, I couldn't ride, lost control and I fell," she said.

The fall left her with four fractures in her ankle. She was rushed to a hospital, where doctors performed a major surgery, inserting two rods and 13 screws to stabilise the shattered bones.

After several days of treatment, she was discharged on June 12. But the road to recovery is expected to be long and painful. Her daughter, who was riding pillion, escaped with minor injuries.The accident has also taken a heavy financial toll on the family. Medical expenses have already crossed Rs 2.3 lakh. With her husband working abroad, arranging funds for the surgery and treatment became an additional challenge during an already traumatic time.

Shaziya's brother, Imran Rasheed, said the accident took place on a poorly lit stretch of road and could easily have turned fatal had another vehicle been approaching from behind. By God's grace, there was no vehicle immediately behind them. If a bus or a speeding car had been there, the consequences would have been much more serious, he said. Rasheed, who lives in JP Nagar while his sister resides in North Bengaluru, said he received a distress call moments after the accident and had to urgently coordinate with friends and acquaintances nearby to help her until family members arrived.

What is even more alarming, according to Shaziya, is that the cable continued to pose a threat after her fall. As she sat injured by the roadside waiting for assistance, she allegedly saw the same cable snag the side mirror of a passing autorickshaw.

KARNATAKA LEADER HORATTI CALLS FOR GOVERNANCE EDUCATION INSTITUTE

Horatti proposes political leadership college and warns declining standards in Karnataka legislative debates and governance quality.

VIJAYAPURA

Legislative Council Chairman Basavaraj Horatti has called for the establishment of a dedicated political leadership college to train youth interested in public life, while also expressing concern over the declining quality of debates in legislative bodies.

Speaking during a visit to Kalaburagi, Horatti said he was originally from the Vijayapura region and often engages in discussions related to education and teacher welfare during his visits. He noted that his trip was largely personal and focused on meeting friends and attending felicitation programmes for meritorious students.

Highlighting the absence of structured training for aspiring politicians, Horatti questioned why there are institutions for engineering and medicine but none for political education and governance. He said young people interested in politics often lack proper guidance and structured learning opportunities.

He revealed that he had already discussed the idea with Karnataka Assembly Speaker U T Khader and received encouragement in earlier conversations with former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. He added that he plans to take the proposal forward by consulting Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar and other legislators.

Horatti also voiced concern over what he described as a decline in discipline and debate quality in legislative houses. He said that in earlier decades, discussions were more focused and conducted with seriousness, whereas today's proceedings are often disrupted by interruptions and lack of quorum.

Recalling his early legislative experience in the 1980s, he said senior leaders once engaged in long, detailed debates that were patiently heard by all members. He contrasted this with present-day sessions, where arguments often escalate and discussions lose direction.

He described earlier legislative years as "golden days" and said presiding officers now face greater difficulty in maintaining order and ensuring meaningful debates.

Horatti's remarks have added to ongoing discussions on political reforms, the need for leadership training institutions, and strengthening the quality of democratic functioning in legislative bodies.

QUICK READ

Farmers' Jowar payments delay triggers protest warning

Sindhanur

Former minister and KOF Chairman Venkatrao Nadagouda has warned of a major agitation by the Janata Dal (Secular) if pending payments for hybrid Jowar farmers are not released within two to three days in Sindhanur. Addressing a press conference, he said farmers have been waiting nearly three months after selling their produce and are facing severe financial stress during the monsoon season when they need funds for seeds and fertilizers. Nadagouda accused local legislators and officials of neglecting farmers' issues while focusing on political activities and internal power struggles. He urged the government to immediately clear the dues, warning that theJD(S) will launch intensified protests if the delay continues.

School roof collapse raises safety concerns

Kalaburagi

A portion of the roof of a Government Higher Primary School in Sangolgi C village of Aland taluk in Kalaburagi collapsed on Sunday morning. The incident occurred around 8 a.m., but no students or staff were present as it was a holiday, preventing a major tragedy. Locals reported sudden structural failure that caused damage to the building. Authorities are expected to inspect the school before reopening classes. The incident has raised fresh concerns about the safety of ageing government school infrastructure in the district. It comes just days after a similar roof collapse at a pre-university college in Kalaburagi that injured five students, prompting calls for urgent safety audits and repairs.

Police bust motorcycle theft gang, 50 bikes recovered

Sindhanur

Police in Balaganur under Sindhanur subdivision have busted a motorcycle theft racket and recovered 50 stolen bikes worth about ₹35.20 lakh. Five accused have been arrested, while two others are still absconding. The operation began after a Royal Enfield motorcycle was reported stolen in January, leading investigators to uncover a wider inter-district network involved in repeated vehicle thefts. According to police, the gang targeted parked motorcycles at night and sold them across Karnataka and neighbouring Andhra Pradesh. The recovered vehicles were traced to multiple police station limits including Maski, Lingsugur and Sirwar. Officials said this is the largest recovery of stolen motorcycles in the Sindhanur subdivision so far.

BJP urges strong support for electoral revision drive: MLA Prabhu Chavan

AURAD, BIDAR

Chavan urged voter list revision to remove errors, add eligible voters, and ensure accurate electoral rolls for free and fair elections.

MLA Prabhu Chavan has called on BJP workers to actively participate in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, describing it as a crucial exercise to strengthen democracy and ensure transparent voter lists.

Speaking at a party workers' convention organised by the BJP Aurad Taluk Mandal in Aurad, he said the SIR process is not merely administrative but an important initiative to improve the accuracy and credibility of electoral rolls.

Chavan said the key objectives of the revision include removing duplicate and ineligible entries, adding eligible voters, and correcting errors in existing voter records. He urged party workers to ensure that people in villages verify their voter details and make necessary corrections.

He emphasised that the government has provided an opportunity for citizens to update their electoral information, and this should be fully utilised to strengthen the democratic process. According to him, accurate voter lists are essential for free and fair elections.

BJP District President Somnath Patil also addressed the gathering, stressing that party workers must take responsibility in spreading awareness about the revision exercise. He pointed out that names of deceased persons and outdated entries still appear in voter lists in several areas.

He added that the Election Commission and the Central Government have enabled corrections to ensure more reliable electoral rolls, and urged workers to assist voters in updating their details at the grassroots level.

The convention witnessed participation from several local leaders and party functionaries, who reiterated the importance of door-to-door outreach to ensure maximum voter inclusion and correction of inaccuracies.

Leaders concluded that a clean and updated electoral roll is essential for strengthening democracy and ensuring transparency in the electoral process.

Eddelu Karnataka march begins in Bidar opposing SIR, demanding inclusive voter rolls and protection of electoral rights.

Bidar Anti-SIR March launched ahead of Bengaluru rally

BIDAR

An awareness campaign opposing the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls was launched in Bidar as part of preparations for a statewide convention scheduled at Freedom Park in Bengaluru on June 20.

The march, organised under the banner of "Eddelu Karnataka" along with secular political parties and progressive organisations, was flagged off at Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Circle in Bidar city. The campaign will travel across several districts in the Kalyana Karnataka region before reaching Bengaluru for the main convention.

Leaders participating in the campaign alleged that the SIR process could lead to exclusion of eligible voters from electoral rolls and thereby affect their constitutional right to vote. They urged authorities to ensure that no eligible citizen is removed during the revision exercise.

J. M. Veerasangayya, addressing the gathering, said the Election Commission should avoid implementing what he termed "unscientific criteria" used in other states. He also demanded that the state government facilitate issuance of necessary documents through Gram Sabhas for voters lacking records.

Speakers said minor documentation issues should not become a reason for exclusion from voter lists. They emphasised that the revision process must be inclusive and transparent to safeguard democratic rights.

Baburao Honna of the Communist Party of India (CPI) also participated, warning that improper implementation of SIR could weaken democratic participation and voter rights. He called for collective resistance to protect constitutional values.

Other leaders, including representatives from Dalit and women's organisations and political groups, stressed the need to educate citizens about the SIR process and mobilise public awareness across districts.

Organisers said the campaign aims to build a statewide movement on voter rights and culminate in the June 20 Bengaluru convention, where further strategies will be discussed.

Teachers fund air trip for meritorious students

KALABURAGI

Teachers and staff of Shri Hingulambika High School in Kalaburagi funded an educational air travel experience for 11 meritorious students, offering them their first-ever flight journey to Bengaluru as a reward for academic excellence.

The initiative, costing around ₹95,000, was entirely supported through voluntary contributions from nine teaching and non-teaching staff members. The programme aimed to motivate students from modest backgrounds by exposing them to new educational and real-world experiences.

English teacher Santoshima Basavaprabhu played a key role in arranging the flight tickets, while other staff members contributed financially and helped organise the tour. Students were selected based on academic performance from Classes 8, 9, and 10.

The group included recent Class 10 graduates along with students from lower classes, all of whom were accompanied by Headmaster Raju V. Hanchate and several faculty members. The initiative was designed to combine education with inspiration.

During the Bengaluru visit, students toured key institutions such as the Vidhana Soudha and were given special access to the Legislative Assembly and Council chambers. This exposure helped them understand how democratic institutions function in real time.

The itinerary also included visits to the Jawaharlal Nehru Planetarium, where students learned about science and astronomy, and the ISKCON Temple Bengaluru. The students also experienced travel on the Namma Metro before returning by train.

Teachers said the programme was intended not just as a reward but as an investment in students' aspirations, encouraging them to aim higher in their academic and personal goals.

The initiative has been widely appreciated for highlighting the dedication of teachers who went beyond their routine responsibilities to create a memorable learning experience for their students.

Basavakalyan Hindu Convention awaiting official permission

BASAVAKALYAN

Organisers of the proposed Basavadi Shivasharanara Brihat Hindu Convention scheduled for June 28 in Basavakalyan have expressed confidence that the event will be held as planned despite awaiting formal approval from the taluk administration.

Convention president Gundureddy Kamalapure said the organisers have already submitted the required application and are hopeful of receiving permission through due legal process. He added that the press conference was held to clear confusion surrounding the event.

He said there was no valid reason for objections raised by some groups over the inclusion of the term "Basavadi Shivasharanaru" in the programme name. According to him, the event is intended to bring together people from all castes and communities.

Kamalapure stated that most objections were not from residents of Basavakalyan and asserted that no group has exclusive ownership over the ideology of Basavanna. He described Basavanna as a major social reformer whose teachings belong to all sections of society.

He also said that spiritual leader Kadasiddheshwar Swamiji of Kaneri Math has been inspired by the philosophies of Basavanna, Gautama Buddha, and B. R. Ambedkar, and continues to work on social and spiritual initiatives.

Organisers claimed the convention has received widespread support across Karnataka and questioned opposition to holding such gatherings. They also urged authorities to ensure adequate security arrangements for the event.

The organisers reiterated their confidence that the convention will proceed as scheduled on June 28 with participation from religious and social leaders, including Kadasiddheshwar Swamiji.

Kalaburagi Health official inspects Afzalpur Hospital

AFZALPUR

The In-charge District Health and Family Welfare Officer (DHO) Dr. Vivekananda Reddy conducted a surprise inspection at the Government Public Hospital in Afzalpur following allegations that patient blood samples were being sent to private laboratories.

During the visit, Dr. Reddy reviewed hospital operations and interacted with doctors, staff, and patients regarding the complaints. He issued strict instructions that no fees should be collected from patients for services available in the government hospital.

He also directed hospital authorities to ensure that patients are not referred to private laboratories for tests that can be conducted within the facility. According to him, such practices violate government healthcare norms and undermine public trust in state-run hospitals.

The DHO said the department had received complaints alleging involvement of private labs in conducting diagnostic tests for patients at the government hospital. He assured that a detailed inquiry would be carried out and action would be taken if irregularities were confirmed.

Dr. Reddy also noted public grievances about the functioning of certain doctors at the hospital. He said these complaints would be examined and appropriate disciplinary measures would follow based on the findings of the investigation.

Doctors, hospital staff, and members of the public were present during the inspection. Authorities reiterated that all eligible medical services must be provided free of cost in government hospitals as per regulations.

Chittapur officials crack down on fertilizer irregularities

CHITTAPUR

Officials led by Tahsildar Nagayya Hiremath conducted surprise inspections of agricultural input and fertilizer stores in Chittapur to ensure compliance with government regulations and prevent irregularities in the sale and distribution of fertilizers.

The inspection team included Assistant Director of Agriculture Sanjeevkumar Manakar, Revenue Inspector Manjunath Maharudra, Village Administrative Officer Mainoddin, and Police Head Constable Vijaykumar Rathod. The coordinated team visited several fertilizer outlets across the taluk as part of a routine enforcement drive aimed at protecting farmers' interests during the agricultural season.

At Namma Grower Centre, officials examined bill books, statutory records, stock registers, and availability of fertilizers, including DAP. They instructed the management to ensure timely distribution of fertilizers and to maintain transparency in all transactions. The team stressed that proper documentation must be maintained for every sale made to farmers.

RATION DIVERSION CASE

Chittapur police bust illegal PDS rice storage, seize 32 quintals

CHITTAPUR

Food and Civil Supplies Department officials seized 32 quintals of Public Distribution System (PDS) rice worth around ₹1.12 lakh after raiding a house near Kambaleshwar Math in Chittapur, following allegations of illegal storage and diversion of ration grains.

Acting on credible information, officials conducted a surprise raid at an old house where ration rice meant for public distribution was allegedly being stored illegally. The stock was suspected to have been collected from beneficiaries and routed through unauthorized channels.

Based on a complaint filed by Food Inspector Hirasingh Damulu Chavan, Chittapur Police registered a case against three individuals identified as Anand Sharanappa Karadalli, Tasveer Ghulam Rasool Adaki, and Ashwath Tukaram Rathod. Police officials confirmed that the case has been booked under provisions of the Essential Commodities Act.

According to PSI Manjunath Reddy, officials recovered 80 bags of rice, each weighing 40 kilograms, totalling 32 quintals. The seized stock was estimated to be worth approximately ₹1.12 lakh. The seizure was carried out in the presence of panch witnesses as per procedure.

Investigators said preliminary findings indicate that Anand Karadalli allegedly

collected rice from local residents in Chittapur town. It is further alleged that the financial resources for these purchases were provided by Tasveer Adaki, while Ashwath Rathod was reportedly involved in handling the stock.

Authorities have taken the accused ino custody for questioning to determine the full extent of the operation. Officials are also probing whether a larger network is involved in diverting subsidised food grains intended for beneficiaries under the Public Distribution System.

The Food and Civil Supplies Department stated that strict action will be taken against anyone involved in the illegal diversion or sale of ration commodities. They reiterated that PDS rice is meant exclusively for eligible beneficiaries and any misuse would be dealt with firmly under law.

QUICK READ

Vehicle inspection turns into police chase scene

CH NEWS, Mysuru Kuvempu city police were conducting vehicle checks early Sunday morning when a bike tried to escape without stopping. During the chase, the police car collided with the two-wheeler. The riders abandoned the bike and fled from the spot. The incident was captured on CCTV cameras, showing the sequence clearly. Police said they were checking vehicles when the suspicious bike sped away. Further investigation is underway to trace the riders and understand the reason for escape. The damaged vehicles were removed from the road after the accident scene was secured by police.

Youth caught defacing near Ambedkar portrait

CH NEWS, Chamarajanagar In Chamarajanagar, Karnataka, a tense situation broke out after a young man was caught allegedly smearing dung on a portrait of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in Masanapur village at around 4.30 am on Sunday. The accused, identified as Chandru from the Uppara community, was seen by villagers, who then assaulted him. The incident created tension in the village, and police rushed to the spot to control the situation. Additional Superintendent of Police Shashidhar visited and collected information. Dalit groups and locals strongly condemned the act and demanded strict action against the accused, while authorities continue maintaining peace in the area.

JDS plans massive protest against Bidadi township

Leaders announced a padayatra across 26 villages to unite farmers, demanding project cancellation and fair compensation with consent

RAMANAGARA

Thousands of farmers will join a large protest march planned by Janata Dal (Secular) on June 21 against the proposed Bidadi township project in Ramanagara district. Party leader Nikhil Kumaraswamy has appealed to villagers to take part in large numbers and support the movement to protect farmland and rural livelihoods.

Speaking at a media conference in Aralalusandra, Nikhil Kumaraswamy said the struggle against what he called unjust land acquisition for the township has now reached the streets. He described the project as a real estate driven plan that would harm farmers depending on agriculture dairy and silk production.

He urged the government to immediately stop the Bidadi township project claiming it was designed without proper consent from farmers. He said development should not come at the cost of rural families and demanded transparency in all land related decisions.

Union Minister H D Kumaraswamy also strongly opposed the project alleging that it would benefit land mafias and real estate interests more than local communities. He said the party will support farmers legally and politically in their fight.

Leaders said a padayatra will cover 26 villages affected by the project bringing farmers together to demand cancellation. They insisted that any development must be based on farmer consent and fair compensation for land.

According to organizers the protest aims to highlight concerns about financial burden on the state and lack of transparency in planning. They called on citizens to join the march on June 21 and make it successful.

Opposition leaders including Nikhil Kumaraswamy and H D Kumaraswamy said they will continue to fight for farmers and oppose forced land acquisition. They promised to stand with rural communities until justice is achieved.

The leaders said the movement will remain peaceful and democratic and will continue until the government listens to the farmers and withdraws the project. We also appeal to all villagers to stay united and protect their land culture and future generations from unwanted displacement caused by large township projects in the region. Farmers expressed hope that a fair decision will be taken soon through dialogue between government and affected communities peacefully and quickly.

Minority leaders demand key cabinet role for Zameer

HUNSUR

Members of the Karnataka State Farmers' Association Raitha Parva and the BJD Hunsur Taluk Group staged a protest at Kalpatar Circle in Hunsur, demanding that the state government grant a higher position to senior Congress leader BZ Zameer Ahmed Khan.

Speaking at the protest, Mysuru District Waqf Board President Aziz Ullah Ajju said Zameer Ahmed Khan is one of the most influential minority leaders in Karnataka. He stated that the Congress leader has worked tirelessly for the party over the years and has earned the support of people from different communities. Ajju expressed disappointment that such a leader has not been given a more prominent role in the state cabinet.

Protesters urged the government to appoint Zameer Ahmed Khan as Deputy Chief Minister. They said his leadership has strengthened the Congress party and helped it connect with minority communities across the state. The demonstrators claimed that many supporters believe he deserves greater recognition for his contribution to public service and party activities.

Former members of the Mysuru City Corporation and Action Committee representatives also addressed the gathering. They said supporters of Zameer Ahmed Khan have already organized similar protests in several districts and taluks. They argued that minority communities have consistently supported the Congress party and deserve fair representation in important government positions.

Karnataka State Farmers' Association Raitha Parva State President Dr. Abdul Shukur said Zameer Ahmed Khan has always stood for the welfare of minority communities. He urged the Congress high command to consider him for a key leadership role.

Several leaders, supporters, and members of the Zameer Ahmed Khan Youth Fan Club participated in the protest, calling for immediate action from the state government.

Leaders remember Suraj Hegde's lasting public service

HUNSUR

Political leaders, social activists, progressive thinkers, and well-wishers gathered at Kanaka Bhavan in Hunsur to pay heartfelt tributes to young Congress leader Suraj Hegde. The memorial meeting was organized by the Hunsur Taluk Kurubara Development Committee in memory of the late leader, who was widely respected for his dedication to public service and unwavering loyalty to the Congress party.

Speaking at the event, former MLA H.P. Manjunath described Suraj Hegde as a symbol of commitment and discipline. He said that despite members of Suraj's family contesting against the Congress party in the 2008 and 2013 Assembly elections, Suraj remained loyal to the party and worked wholeheartedly for the official Congress candidates. According to Manjunath, this reflected his honesty, integrity, and deep faith in the party's principles.

Manjunath further recalled that Suraj Hegde possessed exceptional organizational skills and maintained strong relationships with people from all walks of life. He was known for his understanding of political, social, and current affairs, and consistently worked with a people-centric approach. His passing, he said, is a major loss to both society and the Congress party. Senior Dasams leader Harihar Anand Swamy said Suraj lived a simple and humble life despite being the grandson of former Chief Minister D. Devaraj Urs. He noted that service and struggle defined Suraj's life, and his untimely death has left a void that will be difficult to fill.

Former State Shepherds Association President B. Subramanya highlighted Suraj's contributions as Vice-Chairman of the State Government's Guarantee Scheme Implementation Committee. He said Suraj's dedication to social justice and party growth will continue to inspire future generations. Several community leaders, thinkers, supporters attended the tribute programme and remembered Suraj Hegde's remarkable legacy.

Bhovi Samaj celebrates major community achievement

HUNSUR

A long-pending demand of the Bhovi community in Hunsur taluk has finally been fulfilled, bringing relief and happiness to many families. The community has received 24 kunta of land for a community hall and site ownership rights for 100 families, following efforts made by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and former Hunsur MLA H.P. Manjunath.

Members and leaders of the Taluk Bhovi Samaj gathered at the Saibaba Mandir auditorium in the city to honor former MLA H.P. Manjunath for his role in resolving the issue. During the event, Taluk Bhovi Samaj President Timmaras Bhovi expressed gratitude to both Siddaramaiah and Manjunath for helping the community achieve a long-awaited goal.

Speaking to reporters, Timmaras Bhovi recalled that the community had submitted a request to the Chief Minister when he visited Vinoba Colony in the presence of H.P. Manjunath. He said the community is delighted that the government responded positively and addressed their concerns.

A 24-kunta site in Mookanahalli village, Hunsur taluk was sanctioned, granting 100 families title deeds and legal ownership of long-occupied houses

According to community leaders, many families in Vinoba Colony, Hospital Kaval and Udyog Panchayat areas had been living in houses for several decades without official ownership documents. Following appeals from residents, the government initiated steps to regularize the land and provide legal rights to the occupants. As part of the process, a site measuring 24 kunta was sanctioned in Survey No. 90 of Mookanahalli village in Kasaba Hobli of Hunsur taluk. The approval also enabled one hundred families to receive title deeds, giving them legal ownership of the houses in which they have lived for years.

Former MLA H.P. Manjunath said that even though he does not hold any official position now, he remains committed to supporting the people of the taluk. He noted that villagers had approached him with the issue during Siddaramaiah's earlier tenure as Chief Minister, and he worked continuously to ensure the matter was resolved.

Community members welcomed the development and thanked both leaders for their efforts. They said the decision has brought security, dignity and hope to many families, marking an important milestone for the Bhovi community in Hunsur taluk.

Ancient land donation inscription found in Mandya

MANDYA

An ancient Kannada inscription believed to be from the 15th to 16th century has been discovered in Dadaga village of Nagamangala taluk in Mandya district. The stone was found near the Sri Veerabhadreshwara and Kollapuradamma temples after a farmer accidentally came across it while ploughing his field.

The farmer, Shankarappa, noticed a carved stone showing symbols such as the sun, moon, Shivalinga, and Nandi. He immediately placed it near the village temple for safekeeping. Later, researcher Muhammad Kalim Ullah visited the site and identified its historical importance.

Experts examined the stone and confirmed that it is a land donation inscription. It is believed to belong to the Viyasa Samvatsara period and describes a land gift made by a person named Gopaladeva. The donation was made in the northern area of land near Somagahalli lake and was given to devotees of Basava.

The inscription also mentions detailed boundaries of the donated land, names of thirteen devotees, and witnesses who were present during the event. Scholars said such records show how land donations were carefully documented in ancient times. Researchers M N Prabhakar and Dr Nagarajarao further studied the inscription for accurate interpretation. Local villagers and experts also supported the effort to understand its meaning and historical value.

Historians say the discovery is important because it helps reveal details about old traditions, temple culture, and land administration in Karnataka. Authorities have urged people to report such findings to protect historical heritage.

The Quiet Value of Libraries in a Digital World

GUNN J BHARTI , BENGALURU

Libraries are known for the knowledge they hold. The tall shelves, the smell of books, and the peaceful silence creates an atmosphere unlike any other. Within their walls lies stories, history, memories, and generations of wisdom. For a long time Libraries have been places that inspire curiosity, imagination and shape great minds.

Yet, in today's fast-paced digital world, the true value of libraries is often overlooked. With information available at our fingertips, many people question whether libraries still serve a purpose. And are they relevant or have just become buildings filled with books. This change did not happen overnight; it took a lot longer time. To understand this better a few questions were asked to a librarian, Shruti at the Bangalore State Library, to which she responded and said most visitors today are students preparing for competitive examinations, and mostly the reference section is the frequently used part also because students rely on it for study material and research papers. However, she also noted that the number of visitors have decreased over the years. Many now only visit during weekends, while others come here and prefer studying online.

One of the crucial challenges faced by libraries today is lack of funding. She explained that government support is often not enough for maintenance and development.

New books are usually purchased only once a year and are selected based on the demands of visitors. Despite these difficulties, libraries continue to offer resources that cannot always be found online. The librarian mentioned that the library contains several local and historical books that have not been digitized and are unavailable on the internet.

Students and people on the other hand have a different perspective. Most admitted that they do not visit libraries often. Some believe that online platforms have largely replaced libraries because information and books are easier to access digitally.

However, they also felt that public libraries are still necessary. Instead of only lending books, libraries could provide access to online research papers and academic resources.

For many readers, libraries carry a sense of nostalgia. Places such as the historic State Central Library in Bengaluru, The Mythic Society, and many such local libraries remind people of a time when discovering a book meant wandering through shelves rather than scrolling through screens. Bookstores like Fakir Chand in Delhi, Blossom book store evoke similar memories of generations of readers.

Libraries have not lost their relevance; they have simply changed with time. Today, reading can be seen everywhere—people sit under trees in Cubbon Park, travel in metros and buses with books in their hands, and join book clubs to share ideas and learn from others.

Libraries may not always look the same as before, but through book clubs, e-books, moving libraries, and other forms, they continue to encourage reading and learning. They also remain important reminders that some experiences cannot be replaced by a search bar.

Student parliament election held at HPBS Hunsur

HUNSUR

The school parliament election was conducted at the prestigious HPBS School in Hunsur under the guidance of senior headmaster Mr Suresh. Fifteen students from classes five to seven contested in the election, and 148 students cast their votes. Three votes were declared invalid.

According to the results, Sumera Banu, a Class 7 student, secured the highest votes with 23 and was elected as Chief Minister. Rishitha from Class 6 won 20 votes and became Deputy Chief Minister, while Vinay Sagar from Class 7 received 18 votes and was chosen as Irrigation Minister.

The remaining ministerial positions were allocated among other elected students including Finance, News, Health, Swachhata, Education, Library, Horticulture, Sports, Development, Defence, Food and Cultural ministries, ensuring wide participation and leadership experience for all representatives.

Several senior teachers, guest faculty members, parents committee representatives, SDMC members, Karnataka Rakshana Vedike representatives and alumni association members witnessed the election process and encouraged the young leaders.

The school headmaster Mr Suresh and staff congratulated all winning candidates while visitors including SDMC President Shubha, Vice President Mohammed Rafique, members Shivaram, Belthur Venkatesh, Nandini Pallavi, and journalist Hanugud Nataraj visited the polling booth and extended their best wishes to the participants.

CULTURAL HERITAGE EVENT

Cultural program honors Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar legacy

CHAMARAJANAGAR

A special cultural program highlighting the contributions of Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar was held in Chamarajanagar, where speakers praised the Mysore ruler for his lasting impact on the region's development and welfare.

Kannada Sahitya Parishad president and cultural thinker Suresh N. Rigredi said Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar ruled with rare compassion and worked for the progress of Mysore in a way that made the region known across the world. He said it is the responsibility of every citizen to remember and respect the Maharaja's service, as his contributions continue to benefit society even today. The event was organized by Srigandha Kannada Yuva Vedike and Gadinada Kannadiga Horata Vedike at the Kannada Sahitya Parishad auditorium, where several speakers spoke about the ruler's achievements.

Speakers highlighted that Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar played a key role in developing irrigation systems, electricity supply, education, healthcare, railways, roads, bridges, and industries. They also noted his efforts in promoting women's empowerment and supporting Dalit welfare and reservation policies. They said his reign encouraged the growth of small and cottage industries, hostels, universities, and cultural institutions, making Mysore a model of balanced development. Many also remembered the contributions of Sir M. Visvesvaraya and Mirza Ismail, who served as Diwans and supported the administration during the Mysore kingdom's progressive phase. Speakers said Chamarajanagar, once part of the Mysore state, continues to benefit from the vision and planning initiated during the royal period. They added that remembering Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar is a respectful tribute to a ruler who worked for education, culture, public welfare without personal interest.

MLA Shadakshari returns to Tipaturu after full recovery

TUMAKURU

MLA K. Shadakshari has fully recovered from illness, after being treated in Delhi, and has returned safely to Tipaturu, with his family doctor, on Sunday. He was taken to a hospital in Delhi, after he suddenly fell ill during a political visit, linked to meetings with party leaders in the capital. The incident happened, when he travelled to seek support for a ministerial position.

Doctors at Max Hospital, gave him quick treatment, and confirmed that his condition was stable, after initial care. His family doctor, Dr. G. S. Sridhar, later checked him, and confirmed complete recovery. He advised rest before travel, and ensured he was fit for discharge. During his stay, doctors observed that his blood sugar levels, stress, may have contributed to the sudden illness. They advised him to follow a proper diet, take medicines on time, avoid travel strain. A senior doctor also suggested that public representatives should not ignore small health issues, should always keep medical support nearby for safety.

QUICK READ

Stray dogs kill more than thirty sheep

CH NEWS, Harapanahalli
Stray dogs attacked and killed more than thirty sheep at Nere Bommanahalli village in Harapanahalli taluk of Vijayanagara district during the night. The sheep belonged to Rajappa of Bommanahalli village, who had left the flock in a field while sleeping nearby. Five to six stray dogs reportedly attacked the herd, causing the death of over thirty sheep and heavy loss. Farmers said the loss runs into lakhs and demanded immediate compensation from the government and strict control of stray dogs. Villagers also expressed anger that officials did not visit the spot promptly after the incident.

Kalaburagi resident seeks action on headlights issue

CH NEWS, Kalaburagi
A letter submitted by Shivaraj Andagi, President of Andagi Foundation, has urged the Kalaburagi District Superintendent of Police to address rising problems caused by high-beam headlights and traffic congestion. He said increasing vehicles and strong lights at night are creating visibility issues and road safety risks. He requested strict action against high-voltage bulbs and enforcement of traffic rules, including mandatory use of service roads for two-wheelers near the ring road. He also mentioned earlier petitions in transport meetings, which remain unresolved. Authorities have been asked to inspect vehicles during night checks and ensure public safety through immediate corrective measures implemented.

MLA Veerendra Pappi pledges village development works

The MLA said he is committed to ensuring overall development across all villages in the Chitradurga Assembly constituency

CHITRADURGA

Chitradurga MLA K C Veerendra Pappi has said that his main goal is the development of every village in the constituency and assured that he will continue working for public welfare beyond his term in office.

He was speaking after performing bhoomi puja for several development works in Sondekol village of Kakkere gram panchayat limits in the taluk on Sunday.

The MLA said that the people of the constituency have trusted him and given him the responsibility of serving them, and it is his duty to ensure overall development in all villages under the Chitradurga Assembly constituency.

He said that necessary infrastructure such as CC roads, drainage systems, drinking water facilities, electric lights, and rural connectivity roads are being developed in a phased manner using special grants obtained from the state government.

He added that he has been actively approaching the Chief Minister to secure additional funds for development works and ensure that no village is left behind in basic infrastructure development.

Under the 2024–25 relief and development programme, he said that Rs 20 lakh has been sanctioned for Oni road development in Sondekol village, Rs 55 lakh for CC road and drainage works in the SC colony of Kakkere village, and Rs 40 lakh for similar works in the ST colony.

He further stated that the government is prioritising rural development and that several works are already in progress, while remaining projects will be taken up in phases.

The MLA also said that farmers remain the backbone of the country and added that proposals have been submitted for the construction of check dams in various parts of the constituency to support irrigation and agriculture.

Guarantee Scheme Committee district president Shivanna said that the government has implemented several welfare programmes for the poor, including Grihalakshmi, Gruha Jyoti, and free bus travel for women, which are helping improve livelihoods.

Villager Masirappa of Sondekol said that long-pending development works are finally being taken up and expressed gratitude to the MLA for addressing local issues.

Speaking on the occasion, MLA K C Veerendra Pappi said, "I am ready to work with sufficient funds for the development of the area, but do not pay attention to false accusations. My main objective is to develop the Chitradurga Assembly constituency. I have the power to work with the Chief Minister by bringing special funds."

Khandre promises development push in Bidar

BIDAR

Karnataka Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister Eshwar Khandre assured a strong focus on agriculture, infrastructure and youth employment during his first visit to Bidar after taking charge as Cabinet minister.

Welcomed by Congress workers and supporters, Khandre thanked party members, citizens and the media for highlighting local issues and helping bring greater attention to the district at the state level.

Addressing the media, he expressed concern over the rainfall deficit in Bidar, noting that only about five per cent of sowing has been completed so far. He said farmers are hoping for adequate rainfall in the coming days to begin agricultural activities in full swing.

The minister highlighted government support measures for farmers affected by last year's floods, stating that over ₹360 crore in compensation has been distributed and ₹240 crore sanctioned under crop insurance, with a major portion already released.

On fertilizer supply, Khandre acknowledged shortages of DAP and said discussions have been held with agricultural authorities and the Chief Minister. He attributed the issue to global factors and supply constraints, while warning against black marketing and promising strict action against offenders.

Focusing on youth employment, he announced plans to set up employment facilitation centres to connect local youth with private sector opportunities. Skill development programmes will also be expanded to improve job readiness among young people.

He further outlined infrastructure plans including ring roads for major towns, along with improvements in roads, drainage, drinking water and street lighting systems across the district.

In the education sector, the minister proposed model schools under CSR funding with investments of ₹10–15 crore, aimed at providing quality education from primary to pre-university levels.

Khandre also stressed strengthening healthcare services and reducing maternal and infant mortality rates through improved facilities, while upgrading super-specialty care in the district.

Farmers happy as tomato rates improve again

KOLAR

Tomato farmers in Kolar are feeling relieved as prices have increased again after several months of low rates, bringing new hope and better income for cultivators in the region. In the Kolar APMC market, tomato arrivals have increased, and loading work for supply to other states is happening on a large scale, with many lorries lined up for transport.

Farmers had been facing losses in recent months due to falling prices and reduced demand from hotels and buyers, which affected the overall tomato trade badly. Now, demand has increased from several states including Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra, which has pushed prices upward in the market.

At present, tomatoes are being sold at 30 to 40 rupees per kilogram, compared to earlier rates of 10 to 15 rupees, giving farmers better returns. A 15 kilogram box of tomatoes, which earlier sold for 150 to 200 rupees, is now fetching around 500 to 550 rupees in the market, according to traders.

Traders say the price rise is mainly due to seasonal demand and lower supply from other states, as heavy rains have affected production elsewhere, increasing dependence on Kolar produce. Farmers from Kolar, Chikkaballapur, and other parts of South Karnataka are supplying tomatoes in large quantities to meet the growing demand from outside states.

Market experts believe that prices may remain strong for the next two to three months and could rise further if demand continues to increase.

Science-tech workshop to promote innov learning

CHITRADURGA

A Science Teaching Methods Workshop will be held on June 16, 2026, at 9.30 am at the DMRG Hall of the Rural Development and Study Center Gram Sanstha located in V. P. Barangay of Chitradurga city. The program is part of the continuous education initiative called the "Let's Learn Differently" campaign.

The workshop aims to promote innovative, experience-based and student-centered teaching methods in science education. It is designed to help teachers, educationists, trainers and students improve learning through practical and activity-based approaches.

Prof. R. Shankar, a renowned geologist and education expert, will inaugurate the workshop. He is known for his contributions to science education and his efforts in encouraging experiential learning among students and teachers. Dr. Nishikant Handa will serve as the resource person for the session. He will share new teaching techniques, classroom activities and practical methods to make science learning more interesting and effective.

DM Sridhar, CEO of the Gram Sanstha, will preside over the event. The workshop will focus on experiential lea rning, activity-based science education, environmental awareness, earth science con cepts and developing scientific thinking among students. Organizers said the main goal is to move science education beyond textbooks and encourage learning through observation, experimentation and real-life experiences.

Guruprasad said education cannot be bought with money, urging students to achieve it through discipline, effort, and dedication

Hard work in student life leads to lifelong success: M Guruprasad

MANDYA

Senior advocate M Guruprasad has said that students who work hard during crucial academic stages like SSLC and PUC can secure success and happiness throughout their lives. He was speaking after inaugurating the Ankaveera Award ceremony and a felicitation programme for achievers in various fields organised by Kasturi Sirigannada Vedike at Seva Kiran Old Age Home in Mandya.

Guruprasad said that while money can buy many things in today's world, education cannot be purchased and is achieved only through discipline, effort, and dedication. He stressed that lazy behaviour prevents learning and urged students to understand the true value of education.

He advised students to treat books as guides for life and said that consistent effort during school and college years can shape a secure future for the next several decades. He warned that negligence during student life could lead to continuous struggle in later years and encouraged students to focus seriously on their studies at the right age.

Guruprasad also suggested a balanced daily routine of eight hours of study, eight hours of rest, and eight hours of physical activity, saying that overburdening oneself with studies can affect health. He encouraged students to build self-confidence and learn from the life stories of great leaders. He also said that adopting the ideals of the 12th century Sharan tradition of Basavanna can help build a strong and balanced society.

Social worker Chondamma Poornachandra from Mysuru, who gave the introductory speech, expressed concern over the increasing use of mobile phones among children and advised parents to guide their children in using them responsibly.

Dr H C Anand, who spoke after presenting awards, said that students aiming for technical education must secure high marks to obtain government seats, otherwise families may face financial burden due to donations and loans. During the programme, 16 achievers were presented with the Kasturi Siri Ratna Award, while 8 students who excelled in SSLC and PUC examinations received the Ankaveera Award.

Organisers said the main objective of the event was to encourage meritorious students and motivate them to continue academic excellence. Several dignitaries including Seva Kiran Old Age Home trustee G V Kumar, R Yogananda, C J Sujatha Krishna, K Manjula Ramesh, and others were present at the programme.

Bengaluru retail faces impact of e commerce growth

SAIMA MOHSIN, BENGALURU

As customers scroll through discounts and order products online, many local shop owners in Bengaluru say that they are seeing fewer people walk into their stores. Although online shopping offers convenience and variety, small businesses are trying to keep up with the changing buying habits. For many customers, the shift from offline to online is not because they dislike local shopping, but because online shopping is more convenient to their lifestyle.

"It's much more convenient since it's easily accessible and saves time," said Shanum Siddique, who is a frequent online shopper but still prefers buying clothes and groceries in person.

Other customers had similar views. Although they said that they prefer offline shopping, they said online shopping offers a wider range of products and convenience, which has reduced visits to neighbourhood shops.

Many also said that they shop online several times a month and buy groceries online about once a week. They also mentioned that they still visit local stores for fresh fruits, vegetables, and dairy products, but believe online grocery platforms have increased competition for smaller businesses.

For local vendors, the shift feels different. Mohammed Muddasir Sharif, who has been running his store for over 25 years, said customers often visit shops to see products in person before purchasing them online at lower prices.

He added that local businesses struggle to match online discounts while also managing rent, stock, and operating costs.

The impact appears stronger for some neighbourhood grocery stores. Gautam, who has been running a kirana store for five years, said online delivery platforms have reduced customer visits to the shop. According to him, customers frequently compare prices and expect discounts that small stores cannot always offer. He added that his store now accepts digital payments because fewer customers carry cash, but introducing home delivery is difficult due to limited staff.

Not all local businesses have been affected equally. A fabric seller interviewed for this story said customers still prefer to check fabric in person before buying, helping the business maintain its presence despite the growth of online shopping.

Online shopping may not replace local stores entirely, but it is changing how people shop. For Bengaluru's small vendors, staying relevant now means balancing personal service with changing customer expectations.

Kannada awareness conference held in Bengaluru

BENGALURU

A state-level Kannada awareness conference and felicitation programme was held at Nayana Auditorium in Bengaluru, along with the release of the book "Nadahanathegal", organised by the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation Kendra Kannada Action Committee.

The event honoured pro-Kannada activist V C Channegowda, who was praised b arnataka Gandhi Memorial Fund president Woodey P Krishna, pro-Kannada activist Ra Nam Chandrashekhar, Vishnu Sena Samiti president Veerakaputra Srinivas, literary scholar Dr Padmani Nagaraju, and other dignitaries.

Speaking at the event, Nadoja Manu Baligar said V C Channegowda has always worked with dedication for Kannada causes and served without expecting financial benefit during his tenure as ho norary secretary. He described him as a committed and active supporter of Kannada identity.

Dr H C Boralingaiah said Channegowda has contributed to Kannada work for nearly 39 years while serving in the State Transport Corporation. He added that simplicity and dedication helped strengthen the Kannada movement.

Woodey P Krishna said Channegowda is a true rural talent who has devoted his life to Kannada language service. He said Kannada supporters consider him a close associate in cultural and linguistic struggles. V C Channegowda, speaking on the occasion, said his service to Kannada was small but the affection he received from Kannadigas was immense. He stressed the need for stronger recognition systems for language activists and urged the government to address transport employees' issues.

He also raised concerns over employment opportunities for Kannadigas in private companies and demanded proper implementation of the Sarojini Mahishi report. He further appealed that electric buses should be operated under transport corporations rather than private firms.

State president K S Prabhuswamy said the Kannada Action Committee was formed in 1988 to protect Kannada interests in administration and employment. He said the organisation continues to work for language rights and recognition of Kannada activists.

The event concluded with participation from several Kannada activists and organisation office bearers who reaffirmed their commitment to promoting and protecting the Kannada language through continued public efforts and awareness programmes.

Encroachments dog Gandhi Chowk Road

VIJAYAPURA

The stretch opposite Gandhi Chowk Circle in Vijayapura has turned into a major traffic bottleneck due to rampant encroachments, illegal parking and shrinking pedestrian space, causing daily hardship for commuters and residents.

The busy road behind the Government School and in front of Mysore Restaurant witnesses heavy vehicle movement throughout the day. However, indiscriminate parking of two-wheelers and other vehicles on both sides has narrowed the carriageway, leading to frequent congestion and delays.

The situation has worsened due to encroachment of footpaths by street vendors and roadside carts. With pedestrian pathways fully occupied, people are forced to walk on the main road amid moving traffic, increasing the risk of accidents and injuries. Residents say the stretch has become one of the most congested routes in the city, especially as many vehicles travelling from Satellite Bus Stand towards the Railway Station divert through this road via Saraf Bazaar, further increasing traffic pressure. Minor accidents and altercations between pedestrians and motorists are now common, with even small incidents often escalating into disputes due to lack of safe walking space and poor traffic regulation. Citizens have urged the Traffic Police and the city corporation to take immediate action to remove encroachments, regulate roadside vending, enforce strict parking rules in the area.

QUICK READ

Military operation in Jammu forests enters 23rd day

JAMMU

A massive counter-terrorism mission, code-named "Operation Sheruwali," entered its twenty-third day in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district. Joint forces, including the Army and police, are battling dense forests, steep slopes, and rocky mountains to hunt down hidden militants. The rugged border terrain poses extreme challenges, and one brave soldier tragically died after falling from a rock last week. Officials reinforced the area to prevent terrorists from escaping. This prolonged operation highlights an intense effort to reclaim the region, which has recently seen a worrying rise in foreign mercenary activity.

CBI arrests three forest officials for corruption

SRINAGAR

The Central Bureau of Investigation arrested three forest department workers on bribery charges in Jammu and Kashmir's Budgam district. The arrested individuals include a forest ranger, a forester, and a casual laborer. Investigators caught the laborer red-handed while he was allegedly accepting a bribe of 15,000 rupees. The operation followed a specific complaint about illegal demands for money. While local anti-graft bodies usually handle state corruption, the central agency stepped in using its special jurisdiction over the union territory. Officials confirmed that further investigations are underway.

LG Sandhu introduces 'Thana Divas' in Delhi

NEW DELHI

Under new guidelines from Lieutenant Governor Taranjit Singh Sandhu, the Delhi police launched "Thana Divas-Jan Sunwai" to boost public accountability. Commissioner Satish Golchha said every police station will host open public hearings from 10 am to 2 pm on Saturdays starting next week. Senior officers will rotate attendance to ensure rapid grievance redressal and hear every citizen. SHOs must maintain citizen-friendly spaces, and districts will face strict fines for negligence.

GK Vasan announces TMC exit from NDA

TMC (Moopanar) exited NDA, signaling a strategic shift to rebuild its independent political base.

CHENNAI

In a major political shakeup in Tamil Nadu, the Tamil Maanila Congress (Moopanar), or TMC, announced its decision to exit the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA). Party chief G.K. Vasan made the official declaration following an emergency executive council meeting in Chennai, stating the move aims to revive the party's grassroots presence.

Vasan explained that the decision is purely strategic, aimed at transforming the regional outfit into a self-reliant political movement. Party workers increasingly felt that staying within a larger multi-party coalition restricted local responsibilities and slowed independent growth. By cutting ties, the TMC plans to focus heavily on rebuilding its organizational framework and expanding its solo presence across the state.

Despite the exit, the former Union Minister clarified that the departure is completely amicable, maintaining that the party holds no grudges or differences of opinion against the BJP or other alliance partners. However, Vasan openly acknowledged that the alliance had struggled to win key elections over the past few years. Most recently, the TMC drew a blank in the 2026 state assembly elections, where the coalition slipped behind its rivals.

While Vasan noted that electoral alliances remain necessary for survival during polling seasons, the current priority is to strengthen the party from within. Political insiders suggest the TMC may eventually explore fresh options, including a potential shift toward other major local coalitions. For now, the party is embarking on a solo journey to reclaim its historical political influence in Tamil Nadu.

Min launches Bawana projects worth Rs 10 cr in Pooth Khurd

NEW DELHI

Delhi Social Welfare Minister and Bawana lawmaker Ravinder Indraj Singh launched various development projects worth 10 crore rupees in Pooth Khurd village. Funded by the Delhi Rural Development Board, these initiatives aim to upgrade local civic infrastructure.

The comprehensive projects include strengthening internal village roads, constructing pedestrian pavements, and developing modern drainage systems to eliminate severe waterlogging. Minister Singh stated that the completion of these works will significantly boost connectivity in Pooth Khurd and nearby areas, ensuring smoother daily commuting and better access to essential public services.

According to the Minister, providing modern infrastructure to rural sectors is a top government priority. He emphasized that the projects are designed with a long-term vision to improve the overall quality of life and meet future requirements. Strong roads and efficient drainage systems form the very foundation of sustainable rural development.

Delhi minister Ravinder Indraj Singh launched ₹10 crore infrastructure projects in Pooth Khurd, aiming to improve roads, drainage, connectivity and civic amenities.

This announcement comes just one day after Singh launched similar development works worth 20 crore rupees in Deep Vihar. He highlighted that these back-to-back investments reflect the government's serious commitment toward transforming the entire Bawana constituency. Local residents will soon experience the positive impact of these initiatives directly on the ground. The Delhi government plans to introduce more projects focused on sanitation, transportation, and public facilities.

India's highway network has expanded dramatically over 12 years, driven by expressways, faster construction and ambitious infrastructure projects.

India supercharges national highway network growth nationwide

NEW DELHI

India has witnessed an unprecedented transformation in its road infrastructure over the last 12 years.

Official data shows a massive expansion of the National Highway network alongside the rapid construction of iconic expressways.

A major driver of this boom is the flagship Bharatmala Pariyojana program. Designed to optimize freight and passenger movement, the project has already seen the completion of over 22,000 kilometers of roads. Overall, India's total highway network has expanded by nearly 61 percent, jumping from around 91,000 kilometers in 2014 to over 146,000 kilometers in 2026. This growth is fueled by a dramatic construction speed increase, which soared from 11.6 kilometers a day to nearly 34 kilometers daily.

Several mega-projects highlight this engineering success. The ambitious 1,386-kilometer Delhi-Mumbai Expressway is set to become the nation's longest highway, heavily reducing travel times between major financial hubs. Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently inaugurated two fresh sections of this corridor in Gujarat earlier this month.

Other regions are benefiting similarly. In the north, the newly opened Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor has slashed travel times from six hours to just two and a half hours. Meanwhile, southern India is celebrating the Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway, which cut commute times down to 75 minutes.

These modern expressways do more than just connect cities. By easing traffic, improving logistics, and linking remote areas, India's highway revolution is successfully strengthening the country's economic backbone, creating jobs, and inviting valuable new investments.

Odisha celebrates monsoon arrival with Raja festival

BHUBANESWAR

Odisha kicked off its three-day Raja Festival, receiving warm wishes from President Droupadi Murmu, Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati, and CM Mohan Charan Majhi.

This prominent agrarian festival honors Mother Earth and celebrates the arrival of the monsoon season.

In her greetings, President Murmu highlighted how the festival encourages living in total harmony with nature through traditional cakes, swinging games, and betel leaves. She expressed hope that the spirit of the celebration would inspire citizens to dedicate themselves to nation-building, wishing peace and prosperity for all.

Chief Minister Majhi described the festival as a living tradition of Odia identity that celebrates the unique confluence of the earth and feminine power. According to local cultural beliefs, Mother Earth undergoes a creative period of rest during these three days. Out of deep respect, farmers suspend all agricultural activities to express their gratitude. Similarly, women and girls are completely relieved of their daily household responsibilities to enjoy the festivities in a grand manner. He added that environmental protection is deeply embedded in the grand celebration.

He emphasized that the festival beautifully connects Odisha's rich culture, nature, and progress. Chief Minister Majhi concluded by wishing that the sweetness of the traditional Poda Pitha and betel leaves would strengthen social harmony and family bonds across the state. He urged everyone to seek the blessings of the earth to build a highly prosperous, self-reliant, and empowered Odisha.

Nara Lokesh showcases rapid momentum in Amaravati construction

AMARAVATI

Andhra Pradesh's Minister for Human Resources Development, Information Technology, and Electronics, Nara Lokesh, declared that development works for the state capital, Amaravati, are moving ahead in full swing. Taking to social media, Lokesh asserted that the ambitious capital project is on full throttle with absolutely no intentions of hitting pause.

To back his claims, Lokesh shared a video showcasing the rapid momentum of various ongoing projects across the city. The video clarified that construction has not stopped despite the arrival of monsoon rains, dismissing rumors of delays as false propaganda. Visuals highlighted continuous activity on iconic structures, including the State Assembly, High Court, arterial roads, reservoirs, ministerial bungalows, and residential towers for government officials.

Compounding this message, Municipal Administration Minister P Narayana fiercely defended the financial blueprint of the capital. He accused the opposition YSRCP of spreading misleading rumors regarding excessive project expenditures. Narayana pointed out that such negative campaigns would only continue to erode the opposition's remaining political support.

To offer clear perspective, Narayana compared state costs to recently approved Union Cabinet projects. He noted that while the Central government's residential complex costs 3,945 rupees per square foot, Amaravati's flagship HappyNest housing project is being built at a lower rate of 3,393 rupees per square foot.

The minister also inspected critical canal and drainage development projects designed to prevent urban waterlogging. He concluded that these crucial bridge and drainage works are progressing rapidly to ensure seamless flood management during the rainy season.

Assam secures GI tags for four products

GUWAHATI

Four iconic cultural and artisan products from Assam have officially received Geographical Indication tags from the Government of India.

As per officials, this certification marks a major milestone in preserving the state's indigenous heritage and boosting the livelihoods of thousands of rural weavers and craftsmen.

The newly protected items include Karbi Anglong Handloom Products, the traditional Assam Bihu Pepa instrument, unique Assam Bamboo Crafts, and Deuri Handloom Products. These products represent a diverse spectrum of the state's tribal heritage, traditional craftsmanship, and vibrant cultural identity.

The successful registration was supported and facilitated by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development. Loken Das, the chief general manager of the bank's state branch, noted that this recognition brings the total number of local trademarked items supported by the financial institution to twelve.

The official status provides vital legal protection against unauthorized imitation and misuse.

Suresh Gopi links fuel prices to global supply disruptions

NEW DELHI

Any future updates to domestic petrol, diesel, and cooking gas prices will depend heavily on the availability and stability of global crude oil supplies, Union Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas Suresh Gopi stated recently.

Gopi emphasized that the Central government is keeping a very close watch on developments across international energy markets before making any definitive decisions regarding retail fuel prices. He noted that top officials, including Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, will thoroughly analyze incoming global supply flows and the broader international energy environment moving forward.

The statement comes at a challenging time for the petroleum sector. Ongoing geopolitical conflicts involving Iran and Israel have disrupted traditional networks, driving up international crude values. Currently, India's public sector oil marketing companies continue to absorb significant financial losses, losing between 600 crore and 750 crore rupees daily to shield domestic consumers from these severe international price spikes.

Fortunately, highly positive diplomatic breakthroughs are on the horizon. Reports indicate a historic peace agreement between the United States and Iran is close to being finalized. This crucial deal is expected to promptly reopen the vital Strait of Hormuz, unlocking the frozen flow of oil and gas exports from the Persian Gulf and driving down global energy costs.

To secure its national energy needs during these volatile times, India has successfully diversified its sourcing. The country has significantly stepped up imports from alternative suppliers, including Venezuela, Nigeria, Angola, and Russia.

Return looted weapons or face arrest: Manipur DGP

IMPHAL

Manipur DGP Mukesh Singh announced that security forces have recovered around 70 percent of the weapons looted during the state's ethnic violence. He warned of stern action against individuals who continue to illegally possess firearms.

DGP Singh emphasized that police and paramilitary units will deal severely with anyone holding unauthorized arms or trying to take the law into their own hands. He stated that offenders will be arrested at any cost. Security forces plan to intensify search operations across various districts until normalcy returns. Additionally, the police department's social media monitoring cell is actively taking down anti-social platforms to stop the spread of rumors that cause inter-community conflict.

Singh, who assumed charge as police chief on June 1, recently visited multiple vulnerable districts to review law-and-order trends. He stressed the importance of strengthening coordination among law enforcement agencies while maintaining complete impartiality and professionalism.

Official reports indicate that during the ethnic violence that erupted in May 2023, mobs and militants looted more than 6,000 sophisticated weapons from police stations and armories. Recovery efforts have been ongoing since then, boosted by government appeals for voluntary surrenders.

THE PRICE OF NATURE

HP wildlife park fee hike sparks political fury

SHIMLA

The Congress-led government in Himachal Pradesh has triggered a massive political storm after doubling entry fees for wildlife parks and sanctuaries.

For Indian visitors, costs have jumped from 150 to 300 rupees, while foreign nationals must now pay 600 rupees. This 100% hike has drawn sharp criticism from the opposition BJP, who argue it reveals deep flaws in the state's financial management.

BJP spokesperson Pradeep Bhandari attacked the decision, claiming the government is "looting" citizens to pay for its own incompetence. Critics describe the move as a desperate measure to manage a crushing debt burden, which Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu confirmed has reached approximately 1.01 lakh crore rupees as of early 2026.

With nearly 70% of the budget consumed by salaries, pensions, and debt repayments, the opposition warns that the state is struggling just to function.

This fee increase is not viewed as an isolated event. The BJP points to a pattern of recent cost-shifting, noting previous hikes in bus fares, electricity tariffs, and water cess. The government also faces ongoing allegations regarding various departmental scandals, fueling claims of systemic corruption and poor administration.

The notification, signed by Chief Secretary K.K. Pant, also raised fees for professional photography within these protected zones. While the government attempts to balance its books, residents and tourists are left questioning the sustainability of these constant price hikes. As assembly elections approach next year, the debate over the state's fiscal health and economic policies continues to intensify daily.

Bandyopadhyay's move signals growing Trinamool rebel faction

NEW DELHI

The opposition Congress and Trinamool Congress lashed out at the BJP, accusing it of completely finishing morality in Indian politics. The sharp reactions follow growing dissent and widening internal cracks within the Mamata Banerjee-led party.

The political storm intensified after Trinamool MP Sudip Bandyopadhyay visited a Union Minister's residence, signaling rising support for a growing rebel faction. Within the state assembly, 58 out of 80 Trinamool lawmakers recently defied their high command's leadership choices, electing Ritabrata Banerjee as their leader instead.

Trinamool leader Kirti Azad fiercely criticized the dissenting lawmakers, stating they should have resigned rather than switching sides. Azad claimed the defectors are acting out of pressure, intimidation, and greed, pointing out that their actions lack consensus. He noted that the faction claims to form an opposition bloc locally while simultaneously offering support to the ruling NDA coalition in New Delhi.

QUICK READ

Two medical students drown in Gwalior dam

GWALIOR
A tragic picnic ended in disaster as two second-year MBBS students drowned in Gwalior's Tigra Dam. The victims, Ayush Srivastava and Gopal Agarwal, were part of a group of eight medical students visiting the dam. The duo slipped on rocks and fell into a restricted, 50-foot-deep zone known as "Kachchi Paar." Local police and disaster response teams launched a massive 17-hour rescue operation using boats and high-powered searchlights. While Gopal's body was found on 13th June, divers recovered Ayush's body the next day in the afternoon. Investigations are underway so find out more about this incident.

Father convicted after minor son caught driving

SRINAGAR
A Srinagar court convicted a vehicle owner for allowing his minor son to drive, highlighting a firm stance on road safety. Judge Shabir Ahmad Malik found Haroon Khan guilty under the Motor Vehicles Act after traffic police caught the teenager driving. The court initially proposed a strict three-year jail term and a 25,000-rupee fine. It also ordered his vehicle registration canceled for one year. However, because the father pleaded guilty and had no prior criminal record, the court granted him probation. Khan was released after signing a two-lakh-rupee good behavior bond.

3 remanded in police custody over deadly Delhi fire

NEW DELHI
A Delhi court remanded three key suspects to two days of police custody following a horrific fire that killed three people in Tughlakabad Extension. The suspects identified as Niranjan, Rajkumar, and Sarita were arrested after a viral CCTV clip surfaced on social media, prompting investigators to suspect foul play. The early Friday morning blaze started in the ground-floor parking lot, destroying multiple parked two-wheelers before thick smoke trapped residents across five floors. Emergency teams rescued eight people from the burning structure, but three victims tragically died, and two others remain in critical condition. Police are currently analyzing the video timeline to establish the suspects' exact roles in the tragedy.

Dhillon flags off special Ambedkar pilgrimage buses

Punjab BJP launched a Panch Teerth Yatra, taking devotees to 5 key sites linked to Ambedkar.

CHANDIGARH

Punjab BJP President Kewal Singh Dhillon flagged off three special buses carrying devotees on the Panch Teerth Yatra. This meaningful pilgrimage offers participants a unique opportunity to visit five historic sites dedicated to the life and legacy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

The week-long journey will run until June 21, taking around 150 devotees to major landmarks across India. The tour includes Babasaheb's birthplace in Mhow, Deekshabhoomi in Nagpur, Chaityabhoomi in Mumbai, Mahaparinirvan Sthal in Delhi, and the Virtual Shiksha Bhoomi. Each location represents a vital chapter in Dr. Ambedkar's historic fight for social justice.

Dhillon highlighted that the central government has invested approximately 2,000 crore rupees to develop and preserve these important memorials. He emphasized that these efforts ensure future generations can stay connected to Ambedkar's ideals. Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, these five key locations have received national recognition to highlight their cultural and social value.The traveling delegation is being led by S.R. Laddhar, a retired IAS officer and the current President of the BJP Scheduled Caste Morcha in Punjab. Laddhar explained that the main goal of this journey is to spread Dr. Ambedkar's message of equality to every corner of society while showing the country's deep gratitude.

By funding this trip, the party aims to make these historical landmarks accessible to everyday citizens. The atmosphere was celebratory as the buses departed, marking the start of an educational and spiritual journey honoring India's founding father of the constitution.

India targets 100 gigawatts wind capacity by 2030

India will host the Global Wind Day 2026 Conference in Goa, spotlighting rapid wind energy growth and ambitious clean power targets.

NEW DELHI

India is set to host the Global Wind Day 2026 Conference in Goa. Under the theme "Wind Energy: From Ambition to Acceleration," the event highlights the nation's massive green energy push. Officials plan to use India's vast natural resources to reach 100 gigawatts of wind capacity by 2030.

Currently, India ranks fourth globally in wind power. The country's wind capacity grew from 21.04 gigawatts in 2014 to 56.09 gigawatts in March 2026. Another 28 gigawatts are already being built. To break more records, India recently added 6.05 gigawatts in a single year, proving that clean energy is expanding faster than ever.

The Goa conference will bring together top government agencies, state leaders, and industry experts.

They will discuss grid readiness, manufacturing, and exporting Indian-made wind turbines to global markets. Excitingly, almost 80% of wind turbine parts are now made locally, creating a strong domestic supply chain for blades, towers, and gearboxes.

Wind energy is also helping keep India's lights on during busy times. Nearly 45% of wind power is generated during peak demand hours, perfectly complementing solar energy and making the national power grid more reliable.

Government studies show India has an incredible potential to generate over 1,163 gigawatts of wind power at higher altitudes.

Most of this wind wealth is located in eight resourceful states, including Rajasthan and Gujarat. By using advanced technology and monitoring stations, India is well on its way to securing a cleaner, self-reliant energy future.

'The Chief Minister backstabbed senior Congress leader Meenakshi Natarajan by framing her in a false corruption case in Hyderabad'

KTR accuses Telangana CM of framing Natarajan

HYDERABAD

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader K.T. Rama Rao launched a fierce attack on Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy.

He alleged that the Chief Minister backstabbed senior Congress leader Meenakshi Natarajan by framing her in a false corruption case in Hyderabad.

According to KTR, Natarajan was targeted because she exposed Reddy's shady land deals to the Congress leadership. He further claimed the Chief Minister shared this fake case with the BJP to block Natarajan's entry into the Rajya Sabha. KTR called it shameful that the Chief Minister publicly admires Hitler, labeling his behavior undemocratic.

Addressing party workers in Khairatabad, KTR described the current Congress administration as an "utter flop movie." He criticized the government for failing to deliver on major promises halfway through its term. He pointed out that out of a promised two lakh jobs, fewer than 4,000 have been filled, and unemployment allowances remain unpaid.

The BRS leader also challenged the government's grand claim of making one crore women millionaires, offering his resignation if proved true. He noted that the state owes substantial welfare money to local families.

Looking ahead, KTR predicted a local by-election soon due to political defections. He urged his party workers to stay alert against voter list manipulation ahead of the upcoming digital membership drives starting June 25. He concluded that the public is tired of unfulfilled promises and is ready for a political change.

Jewar transformation marks major aviation hub leap

GAUTAM BUDDHA NAGAR

Around 170 farmers from the Jewar region will board a historic inaugural flight to Lucknow. These local landowners voluntarily gave up their ancestral properties to help build the brand-new Noida International Airport.

The unique delegation includes 20 women and will be led by Jewar lawmaker Dhirendra Singh. Upon arriving in Lucknow, the group will meet Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to thank him for accelerating regional development. This flight marks a highly symbolic moment, celebrating the area's massive shift from a quiet farming zone into a major global logistics hub.

Local leaders noted that this trip perfectly matches Prime Minister Narendra Modi's famous vision of making air travel affordable for common citizens.

This marks the realization of that dream on the very soil these families once plowed. Officials describe the trip not just as a standard vacation, but as a journey of true social transformation that honors local food providers.

Lawmaker Dhirendra Singh expressed immense pride, noting that the same workers who spent long days cultivating these fields will now experience their first flight from the runways built on their land.

He credited the smooth construction of the mega-airport to a foundation of deep trust, ongoing dialogue, and mutual sacrifice.

CM Dhami floats 'governance at doorsteps' programme

KHATIMA

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami attended a major public outreach programme in his three-day visit to Khatima. The event, titled "Jan-Jan Ki Sarkar, Mukhya Sevak Aapke Dwar," focused on bringing governance directly to local doorsteps.

Held at the Shaheed Hari Kishan Shikshan Sansthan in Bagulia, he received a warm welcome featuring traditional Tharu cultural performances. Local women from Self-Help Groups gifted him a handmade portrait of Lord Hanuman. During the event, Dhami inspected various government department stalls and inaugurated a new "Didi Cafe" to support women entrepreneurs.

Addressing the gathering, Dhami praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, stating that India has entered a new era of development. He highlighted how central welfare schemes like Ayushman Bharat, PM Kisan Samman Nidhi, and the Jal Jeevan Mission have transformed millions of rural lives. He emphasized that the "double-engine government" uses transparency and technology to eliminate corruption.

Turning his focus to state achievements, the Chief Minister noted massive progress in healthcare, tourism, and roads. He highlighted that Uttarakhand has taken historic steps by implementing the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) and introducing strict anti-cheating laws to protect young job seekers.

Dissident faction has grown to 22 MPs: Kakoli

KOLKATA

Rebel Trinamool Congress leader Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar announced that her dissident faction has grown to 22 MPs. Speaking at the airport while traveling to New Delhi, she confirmed that the rebel group is preparing to break away and form a separate parliamentary bloc.

The political crisis intensified as senior MP Sudip Bandyopadhyay joined the growing list of defectors this weekend. According to inside sources, the rebel lawmakers shifted their strategic meeting from Kolkata to Delhi to finalize their next moves. The dissident group has already requested a formal meeting with Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Monday to officially present their demands.

The Trinamool Congress has faced major internal turmoil following its recent state assembly election defeat. Tensions boiled over on June 1 when a clear divide emerged within the party ranks, with many lawmakers openly revolting against party supremo Mamata Banerjee's leadership. The rebel faction has publicly stated its intentions to break away and support the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) at the Center.

A document leaked earlier this week revealed the signatures of 19 MPs demanding recognition as a separate group under Dastidar's leadership. With two more unnamed lawmakers reportedly joining the ranks today, the group now claims 22 out of the party's 28 total Lok Sabha members. This crucial number allows them to safely bypass strict anti-defection laws, sealing a major political shift that threatens to permanently fracture the regional party.

Maha drama: Raut dismisses 'Operation Tiger' defection rumours

MUMBAI

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut fiercely rubbished speculations surrounding a suspected "Operation Tiger".

He firmly declared that his political party remains completely intact, united, and too strong to be shaken by opposition tactics.

The intense political buzz started after rumors spread that seven out of nine UBT parliamentarians were secretly planning to defect to Eknath Shinde's rival Shiv Sena faction. In response, Raut hosted a crucial party meeting chaired by Uddhav Thackeray to display internal solidarity. He confirmed that all nine lawmakers attended the strategy session, either in person or via video conference.

Mocking the rumors, a defiant Raut told reporters that his leaders are the real tigers who refuse to be intimidated by external pressure. Instead, he boldly threatened to launch an "Operation Wolf" to strike back at political rivals. Supporting this stance, MP Sanjay Dina Patil publicly dismissed exit rumors, questioning why he would ever abandon the Thackeray camp.

Meanwhile, ruling alliance leaders hit back at Raut's theatrical warnings. Spokesperson Shaina NC criticized the opposition, claiming that staying with a sinking ship would only lead to political ruin. She argued that the current government focuses heavily on real on-ground governance rather than fictional animal operations.

This local political drama unfolds alongside a massive rebellion in West Bengal's ruling party, putting regional coalitions across India on high alert. However, the UBT camp insists their ranks are secure, closing doors to any immediate threat of a Maharashtra power shift.

SKYROCKETING SPACE SECTOR

India's space economy set for giant leap: Union Min

NEW DELHI

India's space economy is expected to skyrocket from its current $9 billion to a whopping $45 billion over the next decade. Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh announced this massive projection, pointing to friendly policy reforms, booming private investment, and a rapidly expanding network of young tech innovators.

Speaking at the RISE Conclave 2026, the Minister noted that science and technology have moved out of hidden laboratories and into the daily lives of citizens. He credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for transforming high-tech exploration into a source of national pride. Successful missions like Chandrayaan-3 have connected everyday people to India's interstellar journey.

The growth has been incredibly swift. Just a few years ago, India had only a handful of space startups. Today, more than 400 space companies are actively driving the sector forward.

These private players are breaking new ground in satellite manufacturing, launch services, and tech applications.

Beyond exploring deep space, India is using satellite data to improve lives on the ground. Space technology now plays a massive role in infrastructure planning, city development, and disaster monitoring through initiatives like PM Gati Shakti.

Addressing recent rocket launch hiccups, Singh emphasized that minor setbacks are just learning experiences that help build safer systems. With global investor confidence rising and a newly launched funding network, India is firmly on track to establish its own space station by 2035, securing its spot as a leading global space superpower.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT
Vidhana Soudha, Bangalore.

No. FD 12 JS(B&R) 2026 — Bengaluru, June 15, 2026

PRESS COMMUNIQUE

It is notified for general information that the outstanding balance of **5.7% Karnataka SDL 2026** issued in terms of the Government of **Karnataka,** Finance Department Notification **No. FD 01 BMB 2020 Dated July 10, 2020** will be repaid at par on **July 15, 2026** with interest due up to and including **July 14, 2026.** In the event of a holiday being declared on the aforesaid date by any State Government under the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, the loan will be repaid by the paying offices in that State on the previous working day. **No interest will accrue on the loan from and after July 15, 2026**

2. As per sub-regulation 24 (2) and 24 (3) of Government Securities Regulations, 2007 payment of maturity proceeds to the registered holder of Government Security held in the form of Subsidiary General Ledger or Constituent Subsidiary General Ledger account or Stock Certificate shall be made by a pay order incorporating the relevant particulars of his bank account or by credit to the account of the holder in any bank having facility of receipt of funds through electronic means. For the purpose of making payment in respect of the securities, the original subscriber or the subsequent holders of such a Government Securities, as the case may be, shall submit to the Bank or Treasury and Sub Treasury or branch of State Bank of India, where they are enfaced / registered for payment of interest, as the case may be, the relevant particulars of their bank account.

3. However, in the absence of relevant particulars of bank account / mandate for receipt of funds through electronic means, to facilitate repayment on the due date, holders of **5.7% Karnataka SDL 2026** should tender their securities at the Public Debt Office, 20 days in advance. The securities should be tendered for repayment, duly discharged on the reverse there of as under:

"Received the Principal due on the Certificate".

4. It should be particularly noted that at places where the treasury work is done by a branch of the State Bank of India, the securities, if they are in the form of Stock Certificates, should be tendered at the branch of the bank concerned and not at the Treasury or Sub-Treasury.

5. Holders who wish to receive payment at places other than those where the securities have been enfaced for payment should send them duly discharged to the Public Debt Office concerned by Registered and Insured Post. The Public Debt Office will make payment by issuing a draft payable at any Treasury / Sub- Treasury or branch of State Bank of India conducting Government Treasury work in the State of **Karnataka.**

Sd/- (Dr. Gopal Krishna B)
Deputy Secretary to Government
DIPR/CP/1153/Zen/2026-27 **(Budget & Resources), Finance Department**

QUICK READ

Trump hosts White House UFC cage fights

WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump celebrated his 80th birthday by hosting a historic card of seven mixed martial arts fights on the White House south lawn. The norm-defying "UFC Freedom 250" event features a massive 92-foot arena built just outside the executive mansion. Trump utilized broad executive authority to construct the cage, surviving a late legal challenge from critics. The spectacle arrives at a tense political moment, as Trump faces intense public scrutiny and economic pressure from the ongoing war with Iran. Attendees include high-paying VIP donors alongside a large contingent of invited US military service members.

World Cup bus burned in chaotic Manhattan celebrations

NEW YORK

Thousands of ecstatic fans swarmed Manhattan to celebrate the New York Knicks' historic first NBA title since 1973. The rowdy street parties quickly turned dangerous when a crowd surrounded fifteen World Cup shuttle buses in Times Square. Revelers climbed onto vehicle roofs, and one bus was completely set on fire. Gunfire also erupted during the chaos, leaving a 17-year-old teenager wounded in the foot. Police in full riot gear and on horseback eventually moved in to disperse the crowds, arresting three suspects connected to the shooting incident.

Romania names new PM to resolve crisis

BUCHAREST

Romanian President Nicusor Dan appointed Adrian Vestea as the country's new prime minister. The decision came shortly after independent candidate Eugen Tomac withdrew his bid due to a lack of parliamentary support. Vestea, a 52-year-old liberal politician and county council leader, has been tasked with forming a political minority government. President Dan emphasized that a political solution is crucial to end the current gridlock. This severe political crisis has stalled local policymaking, threatened access to vital European Union funds, and crashed the national currency to record lows.

Indian man fatally stabbed in West London

LONDON

A murder investigation is underway after a 26-year-old Indian-origin man was stabbed to death outside a shop in Southall. Emergency services rushed to the scene, where they found Gurbhej Singh suffering from fatal knife wounds.

NAME CHANGE

I, **SATHISHA B**, S/o. Bettappa, residing at No.59, Nandagokula Nivasa, 2nd Main, 2nd Cross, Behind Jindal Public School, Prakruthinagara, Srikantapura, Nagasandra, Bangalore - 560073, in my Passport No. N6481257 it is mentioned **SATHISH BHOOVANAHALLI**, but my correct name is **SATHISHA B**, I declare that both names refer to me and belong solely to me. I affirm that the facts stated above are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief, vide affidavit dated: 11.06.2026, before Notary GANGAMBIKE H.S., Bangalore.

Denuclearization is irreversibly finalized: N. Korea declares

North Korea reaffirmed its nuclear stance, rejecting US-led allies' calls for disarmament and declaring the issue irreversible

SEOUL

North Korea declared that giving up its nuclear weapons is an "irreversibly finalized" matter. The country's foreign ministry strongly rejected recent calls from the United States and its Asian allies to disarm, calling the demands a foolish daydream.

The sharp statement came after top defense officials from the United States and South Korea held a high-level nuclear planning meeting in Seoul. During those talks, the allies promised to strengthen their

military readiness and reiterated their long-term goal of completely removing nuclear weapons from the Korean Peninsula. Washington also held similar defense discussions with Japan, which irritated officials in Pyongyang.

An unnamed North Korean spokesperson slammed the allied talks, calling them a dangerous attempt to create a nuclear confrontation. State media reported that external political pressure will never change North Korea's permanent status as a powerful nuclear-armed state. The government described its expanding nuclear shield as a completely legal defense system designed to guarantee regional peace and protect its borders from outside interference.

Meanwhile, North Korea is actively working to strengthen its global partnerships elsewhere to counter Western pressure.

The country recently celebrated a major 65-year friendship treaty with neighboring China. Chinese President Xi Jinping even visited Pyongyang to promise deeper economic, infrastructure, and military cooperation in a new era. By solidifying its ties with Beijing, North Korea aims to keep its economy afloat while completely closing the door on future nuclear disarmament talks.

Swiss voters say no to population limit

ZURICH

Swiss voters rejected a proposal to cap population growth, prioritizing economic stability, labor needs and continued cooperation with the European Union.

Switzerland has voted against a controversial plan to cap its population at 10 million. Early results show that 55% of voters rejected the proposal, choosing economic stability and strong ties with Europe over strict immigration limits.

The right-wing Swiss People's Party pushed for the new rule. They wanted to stop the population from crossing the 10-million mark before 2050. If the limit was broken, Switzerland would have been forced to end its open-border agreement with the European Union (EU), its biggest trading partner.

Many citizens are worried about the country's fast growth. The Swiss population has already reached 9.1 million, with foreigners making up nearly 28% of the total. However, voters feared the negative side effects of a sudden lockdown. Experts compared the situation to Britain's messy exit from the EU in 2016, warning it could cause economic chaos.

Local businesses and regular citizens worried about major worker shortages if the law passed. People asked themselves who would serve them at restaurants or care for them in hospitals if foreign workers were banned. Additionally, international trade pressures made voters hesitant to start a new fight with European neighbors.

Ultimately, personal welfare and economic safety won the day. While immigration remains a hot topic across Europe, Swiss voters decided that isolating their small nation was too big of a risk. By rejecting the cap, Switzerland has avoided a major clash with the EU and protected its local job market for now.

Australia is reviewing drone restrictions after a shark attack near Sydney renewed concerns over beach safety measures.

Australia rethinks drone rules after shark attack

MELBOURNE

Australian officials are reviewing drone restrictions to help lifeguards spot sharks after a horrific attack left a swimmer critically injured.

A 35-year-old woman is currently in stable condition at a Sydney hospital following serious injuries to her leg and arms.

The attack happened at Sydney's popular Coogee Beach, just 30 meters from the shore.

Off-duty lifeguard Charlie Verco braved the waters to pull the victim to safety after a large shark dragged her underwater. Following the incident, local authorities shut down several city beaches for 24 hours to scan the water.

Lifeguards frequently use drones to monitor shark activity along the coast.

However, Coogee Beach faces strict flying limits because it sits directly under a major airport flight path.

In response to the crisis, aviation regulators promised to adapt the rules so emergency drones can fly safely.

This incident follows a scary rise in shark encounters across Australia this summer. The country's east coast averages about 20 shark incidents a year, forcing the government to search for better ways to protect swimmers.

Government officials stated they are taking the situation very seriously and want to deploy advanced technology quickly.

By changing drone laws, rescuers hope to spot hidden dangers from the sky before swimmers enter the water.

For now, beachgoers remain on high alert as officials work to balance air traffic safety with the urgent need to protect human lives.

Taiwan opens secure website for Chinese informants

TAIPEI

Taiwan has launched a new website encouraging Chinese citizens to share secret intelligence.

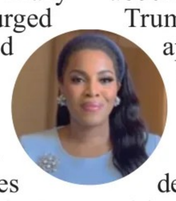
The government claims the secure portal targets people who are unhappy with Beijing's strict political control and slowing economy.

Spelling out its goals, Taiwan's National Security Bureau explained that rising social problems in China have fueled public anger. As a result, more people have secretly approached Taiwanese officials to share inside information. The island hopes this digital channel will safely expand its intelligence network.

To grab attention, the website features a short, AI-generated video showing a fictional Chinese official watching coworkers mysteriously vanish from their jobs.

Mary Millben urges Trump to apologize to Modi

WASHINGTON



Prominent African American singer and vocal advocate for India-US relations, Mary Millben, has strongly urged US President Donald Trump to use his upcoming meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi to fundamentally repair bilateral ties and regain the trust of the Indian public.

The two leaders are scheduled to hold highly anticipated talks on June 17 on the sidelines of the 52nd G7 Summit in Évian-les-Bains, France. Ahead of the high-profile encounter, Millben issued a candid statement asserting that President Trump "owes PM Modi an apology" and should use the strategic interface to orchestrate a genuine diplomatic reset.

She praised Modi's decision to move forward with the meeting despite recent strains in the relationship, calling the gesture gracious. "This is not a meeting the PM needs, but it is one President Trump needs," she said.

South Korean prosecutors launch investigation into local election chaos

SEOUL

A joint team of police investigators and prosecutors is preparing to question South Korean election watchdog officials following a severe shortage of ballot papers during the June 3 local elections.

The National Election Commission (NEC) has faced fierce public backlash after the ballot shortages forced voting to temporarily suspend at 26 polling stations, primarily across Seoul.

Over the weekend, the task force executed a search and seizure on the NEC's servers to secure internal digital messages and records. This digital raid followed physical searches at seven different locations earlier in the week, including the election commission's primary headquarters.

The active investigation is strictly focused on whether election officials exerted undue influence over the ballot printing process and if their immediate response to the shortages violated any laws. Under South Korea's election legislation, civil servants are strictly barred from using their positions to influence election outcomes. Investigators plan to question frontline staff before summoning senior officials, including the NEC's former chief, who resigned immediately after the incident.

Meanwhile, public fury remains high. Spontaneous street protests demanding a full re-run of the election have continued for a tenth consecutive day near a central vote-counting site at the SK Olympic Handball Gymnasium in Jamsil.

While crowd numbers fluctuated around 600 on Sunday morning, police officials noted that turnouts have regularly surged closer to 19,000 during evening rallies.

Because the demonstrations have organized spontaneously without a single leader, authorities are preparing for a prolonged standoff.

Local sports organizations housed inside the blocked stadium have announced plans to hold a press conference tomorrow, pleading with the crowds to allow them access to their offices while the legal investigation runs its course.

Ebola cases rise to 710 in DR Congo as officials deny lockdown rumors

KINSHASA

The number of confirmed Ebola cases in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has climbed to 710, resulting in 149 deaths, according to the country's health ministry record. Concurrently, health officials firmly dismissed widespread social media rumors claiming a nationwide lockdown had been enforced to contain the virus.

According to official ministry data, the case fatality rate currently stands at 21.0 percent, with 324 patients isolated or hospitalized, and 35 documented recoveries. Government teams, provincial authorities, and international response partners are continuously working on the ground to break transmission chains through active contact tracing, targeted vaccinations, and community engagement.

The health ministry explicitly stated that no lockdown measures have been ordered or are under consideration, urging citizens to stop spreading unverified information and rely entirely on official channels.

However, the World Health Organization (WHO) warned that the outbreak is evolving rapidly, expanding geographically across provinces.

Indian vessel Virat 1 suffers engine failure

MUSCAT

The Indian Embassy in Oman confirmed that it is responding to a serious maritime incident involving an Indian-flagged vessel, "Virat 1," off the Omani coast.

The mechanized sailing ship reportedly has fourteen Indian crew members on board. Embassy officials announced that they are actively coordinating intensive search and rescue operations alongside Omani authorities and nearby commercial ships.

This dangerous situation unfolds amid escalating diplomatic tensions. New Delhi summoned US Charge d'Affaires Jason Meeks to lodge a fierce protest against ongoing attacks by US naval forces on merchant ships in the Gulf of Oman. The Ministry of External Affairs condemned Washington's use of lethal force against civilian shipping, noting that these actions have already resulted in the tragic, avoidable deaths of three Indian mariners. India demanded that US forces immediately halt attacks to protect civilian lives and stabilize international trade.

This marks the second time Washington's top diplomat has been summoned recently. Just days ago, India protested an attack on the commercial ship "Settebello," where three Indian crew members died while twenty-one others were rescued.

The region has faced multiple maritime emergencies this month. Last instance where, all twenty Indian crew members aboard the "MT Jalveer" were successfully saved near Oman's Shinas port following a separate assault. Earlier on June 8, a severe fire erupted aboard the "MT Marivex" south of the strategic Strait of Hormuz. Indian authorities remain on high alert, working to ensure the safety of sailors traversing these volatile waters.

Deadly extreme storms lash across Northwest Pakistan

ISLAMABAD

At least seven people have been killed and thirty-three others injured as violent windstorms, lightning, and torrential rains battered Pakistan's northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province over the last twenty-four hours.

According to a damage assessment report released by the Disaster Management Authority, the fatalities included four men, one woman, and two children. The casualties occurred across the Bannu, Shangla, and Mansehra districts when residential walls and weak roofs collapsed under the sheer force of the heavy downpours and sweeping gales. This tragedy follows a separate storm earlier this month that claimed two lives in the same region.

The Pakistan Meteorological Department has forecast continued rainfall for upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, alongside parts of Gilgit-Baltistan and Kashmir, while the rest of the country is expected to remain hot and dry.

Disaster experts note that while national agencies successfully predicted this latest spell of severe weather and issued timely, district-specific alerts, the subsequent destruction exposes a persistent gap between forecasting and actual local preparedness. Vulnerable and densely populated areas were identified well in advance, giving local administrations ample time to mobilize resources and mitigate risks. However, recurring infrastructure failures suggest these warning windows are not being fully utilized.

As the country navigates another volatile weather season, analysts emphasize that merely providing information cannot replace effective local action.

CHANNEL INTERCEPTION MISSION

Royal Marines intercept Russian oil tanker Smyrtos

LONDON

British armed forces intercepted a sanctioned Russian shadow fleet oil tanker in the English Channel. This high-stakes raid marks the first time Britain has led an operation to disrupt oil revenues funding Russia's war in Ukraine.

In the early hours of the day, Royal Marine Commandos and law enforcement officials boarded the vessel Smyrtos. Operating under a Cameroon flag, the ship was

cornered using helicopters, a navy frigate, and a minehunter. Government footage showed elite commandos rappelling onto the deck while investigators searched the ship's paperwork.

Prime Minister Keir Starmer praised the mission, stating it delivers a major blow to Russia's hidden networks. Starmer had authorized the military to detain sanctioned vessels in March, but this is the first time UK forces have taken direct action. The move comes at a crucial time for Starmer, who faces domestic political pressure over military spending.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy thanked Britain for the operation. He urged European allies to pass tougher laws to confiscate Russian oil shipments, arguing that stopping the shadow fleet is vital for peace. Meanwhile, the Russian embassy in London did not comment on the incident.

The captured tanker is currently detained off England's southern coast for further investigation, a task being managed alongside French authorities. Britain has already sanctioned nearly 600 shadow vessels. By moving from sanctions to physical interception, the UK is taking a much tougher stance against the secret fleet keeping Moscow's economy afloat.

QUICK READ

Reliance activates WhatsApp chatbot ahead of 49th AGM

CH NEWS, New Delhi Reliance Industries has activated its WhatsApp Chatbot for the sixth consecutive year ahead of its 49th Annual General Meeting (AGM), scheduled for June 19, 2026. The chatbot enables shareholders, investors and stakeholders to access AGM-related information quickly through Whats App. Users can start the service by sending "Hi" to the designated number and receive updates, mee ting details and responses to common queries. The initiative is aimed at impro ving shareholder engagement and simplifying access to important AGM information. Reliance has been using the digital platform annually to enhance communication and provide a seamless experien ce for participants ahead of its much-awaited AGM.

Delhi limits tariff hike despite rising costs

CH NEWS, New Delhi Delhi Power Minister Ashish Sood said electricity purchase costs have increased by about 31% due to the ongoing West Asia crisis, which has pushed up fuel and generation expenses. However, the Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission has approved only a 2.4% hike in power tariffs, ensuring limited impact on consumers. He explained that the Power Purchase Adjustment Cost is a regulatory mechanism that reflects fuel price changes and is not an additional charge. The PPAC has risen from around 14.5% to 17.9%. The government assured that subsidised consumers will not face any increase in their electricity bills.

Hyundai Motor Group gains 11.8% US market share

CH NEWS, Seoul Hyundai Motor Group captured an 11.8% share of the US automobile mar ket from January to April 2026, according to industry data. The combined performance of Hyundai Motor Co. and Kia Corp. reflects a 1 percentage point increase from the previous year, placing the group fourth behind General Motors, Toyota, and Ford. Total sales rose 1.3% to 589,936 vehicles during the period. Growth was dri ven largely by stron g demand for hybrid and eco-friendly models amid shifti ng consumer preference away from traditional vehicles. The group had already achiev ed a record 11.3% market share in 2025 and may cross 12% this year.X

FSSAI targets misleading food labels, serves notices

The food safety regulator has issued notices to several brands for allegedly using misleading health, vegan and organic claims.

NEW DELHI

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has initiated action against several food companies for allegedly violating food labelling regulations through misleading brand names, trade names and product claims. The regulator on Sunday confirmed that notices have been issued to multiple food business operators (FBOs) for apparent violations of provisions under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.

In a statement shared on social media, FSSAI said the action was aimed at protecting consumers from deceptive marketing practices and ensuring compliance with food labelling standards. The regulator directed the companies concerned to strictly follow established labelling and display regulations.

Among the firms that received notices are Healthy Master, Neuherbs, Plant B, The Health Factory, Troovy, Healthy Choice, Emami and Health Aid. Additional notices were issued to Organic Wisdom, Shine Organic, Two Brot hers Organic Farms, Storia, World of Organic and Iota Water.

FSSAI expressed concern that several trade names and product descriptions could create a misleading impression regarding the health benefits or characteristics of products. It specifically flagged terms such as "healthy" and "True Vitamin," stating that they may not accurately reflect the products' composition or regulatory status.

The regulator also questioned the use of "PLAN B Plant Based Vegan," noting that the branding could imply certified vegan status despite the absence of required approvals and endorsements. Similarly, companies using the term "organic" in their brand names were scrutinised for allegedly lacking mandatory certifications, the Jaivik Bharat logo and required organic endorsements.

It emphasised that food businesses must adhere to regulatory needs to ensure transparency and prevent consumer deception in the marketplace.

8 top Indian firms add Rs 1.90 trillion in value

MUMBAI

The combined market capitalisation of eight of India's 10 most-valued companies surged by nearly Rs 1.90 trillion last week, supported by a strong rally in domestic equity markets and improving investor sentiment.

The gains came as benchmark indices posted robust weekly advances. The Sensex climbed 1,284.61 points, or 1.73 per cent, while the Nifty gained 256.2 points, reflecting broad-based buying across sectors.

Market sentiment was buoyed by optimism surrounding a possible peace agreement between the United States and Iran, raising hopes of easing geopolitical tensions and stabilising global energy markets. The positive outlook encouraged investors to increase exposure to heavyweight stocks.

Among the top gainers, ICICI Bank recorded the highest rise in market valuation, adding Rs 56,223 crore to reach Rs 9.61 lakh crore. HDFC Bank followed with an increase of Rs 38,571 crore, taking its valuation to Rs 11.89 lakh crore.

State Bank of India added Rs 36,138 crore to reach a market capitalisation of Rs 9.39 lakh crore. Other major gainers included Bajaj Finance, which gained Rs 18,367 crore, and Bharti Airtel, whose valuation rose by Rs 14,380 crore.

Engineering giant Larsen & Toubro added Rs 13,241 crore, while Hindustan Unilever gained Rs 10,984 crore during the week.

Eight top Indian firms added Rs 1.90 trillion in value last week amid strong equity rally and improving global geopolitical sentiment.

In contrast, Tata Consultancy Services and Life Insurance Corporation of India witnessed declines in their market valuations. TCS recorded the sharpest fall among the top firms, losing Rs 13,296 crore in market value, while LIC's valuation slipped by Rs 822 crore.

The rally highlights renewed investor confidence in large-cap stocks amid favourable global cues and expectations of easing geopolitical risks. Banking and financial stocks emerged as the biggest contributors to the overall increase in market capitalisation.

The strong performance of leading companies also reflected the resilience of Indian equities, with investors continuing to favour fundamentally strong businesses despite global uncertainties.

Fed verdict, Iran deal hope to guide global markets ahead

MUMBAI

- Fed policy decision to guide sentiment
- Iran peace deal hopes boost markets
- Crude oil prices remain key trigger
- RBI measures may support liquidity
- Foreign fund flows under investor watch

The Indian stock market is expected to remain sensitive to global developments in the coming week, with investors closely tracking the upcoming US Federal Reserve policy decision, progress on a potential US-Iran peace agreement and movements in crude oil prices.

Domestic benchmark indices ended the previous week in positive territory, snapping a two-week losing streak amid improving investor confidence. The Nifty advanced 1.10% to close at 23,622.90, while the Sensex gained 1.73% to finish at 75,527.95.

The key global event for investors will be the US Federal Reserve's Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting scheduled for June 16–17. Although the Fed is widely expected to leave interest rates unchanged, market participants will carefully analyse its commentary on inflation, economic growth and the future path of monetary policy. Any signals regarding possible rate cuts later this year could influence foreign institutional investment flows into emerging markets, including India.

Geopolitical developments in West Asia are also likely to shape market sentiment. Investor optimism strengthened after US President Donald Trump indicated that a peace agreement with Iran aimed at ending regional tensions could be signed on June 14. Markets will monitor the outcome of the proposed agreement and its potential impact on global trade and energy supplies.

Attention will also remain focused on the Strait of Hormuz, a crucial passage for global oil shipments. Expectations of smoother crude transportation through the route and improving regional stability have already eased concerns about supply disruptions. Any sustained progress towards peace could further support global equity markets.

Crude prices remain a significant factor for Indian equities. Prices recently declined to their lowest levels since the early phase of the Iran war, supported by hopes of increased oil exports and reduced geopolitical risks. Lower crude prices could help contain inflation in India and ease pressure on its import bill.

Gaya MSME tech centre to boost Bihar industrial growth

NEW DELHI

In a major initiative aimed at accelerating industrial development and enhancing skill creation in Bihar, the foundation stone for a state-of-the-art Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Technology Centre will be laid at Khizarsarai in Gaya on June 15 (today). The ceremony will be led by Union MSME Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi and Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary.

The project, being developed with an investment of ₹170 crore, is expected to significantly strengthen the MSME ecosystem in southern Bihar by providing advanced manufacturing facilities, industry-focused skill development programmes and technology-driven support services for local enterprises.

The foundation-laying ceremony will begin with a traditional Bhoomi Pujan and will be attended by senior officials from the Ministry of MSME and the Bihar government. The Technology Centre forms part of the Ministry's nationwide network of centres designed to support MSMEs through advanced manufacturing infrastructure, technical services, business advisory support and workforce training.

El Nino threat may push FY27 inflation above comfort zone

NEW DELHI

India may face renewed inflationary pressure in FY27 as a likely El Nino weather event threatens food supplies and pushes up prices of essential commodities, according to a research report by Bank of Baroda.

The report estimates consumer price inflation (CPI) to remain in the range of 5.2–5.5 per cent during the financial year, assuming moderate weather disruptions and crude oil prices averaging between $90 and $100 per barrel.

The report highlighted that there is an 80 per cent probability of El Nino conditions developing during the June–August period, with the likelihood rising to over 90 percent for persistence until at least November. Such weather conditions often result in below-normal rainfall, affecting agricultural output and increasing food inflation.

Despite these concerns, current indicators offer some relief. Reservoir levels across the country remain above normal storage levels as of June 11, while vegetable arrivals in markets have been satisfactory. However, economists cautioned that the adequacy of supply conditions in countering any adverse food or fuel shocks will become clearer in the coming months.

According to economist Dipanwita Mazumdar, headline CPI inflation stood at 3.9 per cent in May 2026, lower than the projected 4.1 per cent estimate and slightly higher than April's 3.5%.

Alarming sign: Rural belts have been the worst affected, with poverty rising from 28.2% in 2018–19 to 36.2% in 2024–25

Pakistan poverty rises to 28.9% amid inflation shock

NEW DELHI

Pakistan's poverty rate has increased sharply to 28.9 per cent in 2024–25, reversing years of progress in poverty reduction, according to the country's Economic Survey 2025–26 cited in media reports.

The report shows that poverty, which had declined steadily from 50.4% in 2005–06 to 21.9% in 2018–19, has risen again due to severe economic pressures.

Key factors include record-high inflation, sharp currency depreciation, flood-related damage, and ongoing economic stabilisation measures that have strained household incomes.

Rural areas have been the worst affected, with poverty rising from 28.2% in 2018–19 to 36.2% in 2024–25. Urban poverty has also increased from 11 per cent to 17.4 per cent during the same period, indicating widespread economic distress across the country.

Regional disparities have widened significantly. Nearly half the population in Balochistan is now estimated to be living below the poverty line, making it the most affected region. Rising poverty levels have also been recorded in Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab.

The report highlights that economic shocks have unevenly impacted households, widening the gap between financially stable groups and vulnerable populations. This growing inequality could limit social mobility and weaken long-term development outcomes. Despite the rise in poverty, the survey noted improvements in social indicators such as education, immunisation coverage and infant mortality rates.

These gains suggest that investments in health and education continue to yield results even during economic stress.

The government has increased funding for the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) by 17%, expanding coverage to around 12 million families. However, officials cautioned that cash transfers alone are not sufficient to address structural poverty challenges.

Economists warn that sustained inflationary pressure and weak growth prospects could further strain living standards unless broader structural reforms are implemented to stabilise the economy and generate employment opportunities.

AI may disrupt cognitive, skill-based jobs in India: CEA

NEW DELHI

Artificial intelligence (AI) could prove more disruptive than earlier waves of automation as it affects both cognitive and skill-based jobs, Chief Economic Adviser V. Anantha Nageswaran said, highlighting the wide-ranging impact of emerging technologies on the labour market.

He noted that unlike previous technological shifts that primarily impacted routine or manual work, AI has the capability to influence tasks requiring reasoning, analysis, and decision-making, alongside traditional skill-based roles. This dual impact makes its economic and employment consequences more complex and far-reaching.

He stressed that the speed and scale of AI adoption will depend on how economies adapt through skilling, education, and policy reforms. He reiterated that India must prepare its workforce for rapid technological change to avoid large-scale displacement risks and ensure inclusive growth.

Economists have widely debated AI's role in transforming labour markets, with some studies suggesting it will replace certain tasks while simultaneously creating new job categories and improving productivity. However, concerns remain that workers in both white-collar and blue-collar sectors may face transition pressures.

The CEA's remarks come amid growing global discussions on AI-driven disruption across industries such as information technology, finance, manufacturing, and services. Experts say challenge lies not only in job replacement but also in reskilling workers to adapt to evolving job roles.

MAKE USE OF CHANCE

NDMC offers 10% rebate on early property tax payments

NEW DELHI

The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) has announced a 10% rebate on property tax payments for the financial year 2026–27 for taxpayers who clear their dues before June 30. The move is aimed at encouraging early compliance and improving revenue collection efficiency.

The rebate scheme is part of NDMC's ongoing efforts to streamline property tax collection and reduce last-minute payment rush. Taxpayers have been advised to utilise online portals and authorised payment channels to avail the benefit smoothly.

The council has been offering similar incentives in previous years, with a 10 per cent rebate also provided for early payments last year. Officials said the consistent incentive structure has helped improve timely tax compliance within the NDMC jurisdiction.

The announcement comes amid significant changes in the property tax regime in the NDMC area. Earlier this year, Parliament approved amendments introducing a uniform Unit Area Method for property tax assessment across the council's jurisdiction.

The new system will replace the earlier rateable value-based assessment for remaining properties, ensuring greater uniformity and transparency in tax calculation. Authorities expect the reform to simplify the process for both taxpayers and administrators.

- NDMC offers ten percent property rebate
- Early payment deadline set June thirty
- Uniform tax method replacing old system
- Online payments encouraged for taxpayers convenience
- Aim to boost timely revenue collection

Tax officials have urged residents to avoid last-minute congestion and complete payments well before the deadline to ensure eligibility for the rebate. Assistance is available through the NDMC tax department during working hours, and detailed information can also be accessed through the council's official channels. The initiative is expected to boost early revenue inflows while providing financial relief to compliant taxpayers.

Higher oil prices may strain India's fiscal balance

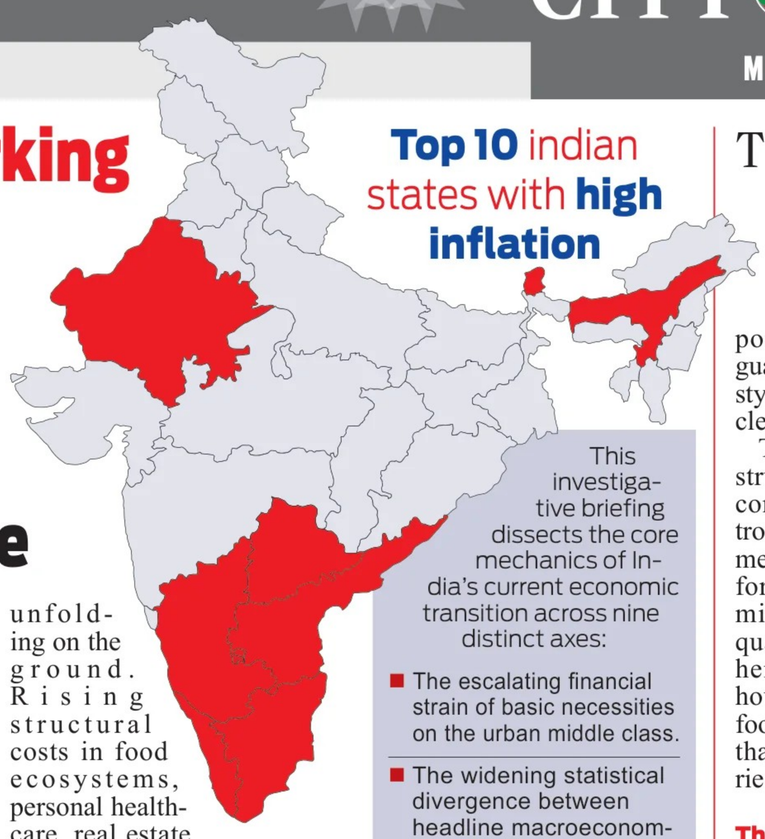
NEW DELHI

Rising crude oil prices in the range of $92–95 per barrel could put significant pressure on India's current account deficit (CAD) and fiscal calculations in FY27, according to brokerage firm Prabhudas Lilladher. The report cautioned that sustained elevated oil prices may increase import costs, widen external deficits and complicate the government's fiscal management efforts.

India, which imports a large share of its crude oil requirements, remains highly sensitive to fluctuations in global energy prices. A prolonged period of expensive crude could raise the country's import bill, exert pressure on the rupee and fuel inflationary concerns across sectors.

The brokerage noted that every sharp rise in oil prices has a direct impact on the current account deficit, as higher import payments increase outflows of foreign exchange. This could also affect investor sentiment and create challenges for macroeconomic stability.

The Comparking Reckoning: Surviving India's nonlinear inflation age



India's macroeconomic theater has crossed a structural threshold. The consumer operating environment is no longer merely fast-paced or subject to cyclical swings, it has converted into an ecosystem defined by nonlinear acceleration, environmental volatility, and deep supply-chain integration. Traditional blueprints for predicting household welfare, assessing rural purchasing power, or evaluating salaried career paths are beginning to fracture.

As the country registers world-leading gross domestic product (GDP) expansions, a quieter economic dynamic is unfolding on the ground. Rising structural costs in food ecosystems, personal healthcare, real estate, and private education are reshaping the daily lives of everyday citizens. This phenomenon is distinct from hyperinflation, rather it is a persistent, structural rise in the baseline cost of living that alters consumer behavior, reallocates household savings, and challenges traditional wealth accumulation models.

This investigative briefing dissects the core mechanics of India's current economic transition across nine distinct axes:

- The escalating financial strain of basic necessities on the urban middle class.
- The widening statistical divergence between headline macroeconomic growth numbers and household purchasing power.
- The direct link between extreme climate shocks and structural food costs.
- The erosion of conventional fixed-income assets and long-term household savings.

The New Face of Inflation: Middle class exclusion from the essentials basket

For decades, the Indian middle-class narrative was built on a reliable social contract such as disciplined education and corporate employment would guarantee a comfortable lifestyle, disposable income, and clear upward mobility.

Today, that narrative faces structural headwinds. While consumer technology, electronics, and digital entertainment have become more affordable, the core pillars of middle-class stability and quality education, comprehensive healthcare, urban housing, and nutrient-dense food, are rising in cost faster than baseline nominal salaries.

The Cost of Human Capital Development

The cost of raising a family in tier-1 and tier-2 urban centers has shifted. Private educational institutions have increased tuition fees, development levies, and transport charges at a rate that consistently outpaces headline consumer price index (CPI) prints. For a double-income household, financing a single child's education from primary school through higher specialized degrees now requires a substantial commitment of long-term disposable income.

Concurrently, private healthcare has experienced a structural upward shift in costs.

As lifestyle-related metabolic conditions rise across urban populations, reliance on private hospital networks has grown. Out-of-pocket medical expenditures driven by diagnostic services, specialized pharmaceuticals, and advanced surgical procedures frequently disrupt household balance sheets, particularly when tertiary insurance policies carry high co-payments or exclude pre-existing conditions.

Urban Space Compression

The structural cost of urban housing remains a persistent challenge for household balance sheets. Commercial and residential real estate prices in key economic hubs have surged, driven by rapid urbanization and premium development projects.

Rental Yield Escalation: Monthly lease outlays in corporate adjacent corridors absorb a substantial portion of salaried take-home income, preventing families from building liquid equity.

Elongated Debt Profiles: To secure property ownership, families are taking on larger home loans with 20- to 25-year repayment periods. This binds a significant share of their long-term earning potential to floating interest rate cycles, leaving limited room for discretionary spending.

Food Inflation And Climate Change: The nonlinear outlook for agriculture

The traditional frameworks used to predict food cost cycles in India are undergoing a major shift. Historically, agricultural prices followed predictable seasonal patterns based on the arrival of the southwest monsoon. Today, climate change has transformed food inflation from a temporary management issue into a complex, structural challenge for the economy.

Volatility in Perennial Crop Cycles

The increasing frequency of severe weather events such as intense summer heatwaves followed by unpredictable rain patterns and localized flooding, is disrupting major agricultural zones.

These shifts shorten ideal crop growing windows, reduce overall crop yields, and create sudden supply shortages in retail markets.

Crop Category	Primary Climate Vulnerability	Price Transmission Metric
Perishable Vegetables (Tomatoes, Onions)	Vulnerable to extreme heatwaves during early growth and sudden	Retail prices can jump 30% to 50% within weeks of a localized .

The Growth Story vs Household Reality: The purchasing power divergence

India retains its position as a primary driver of global macroeconomic expansion, with official figures placing real GDP growth at an impressive 7.4 percent for the fiscal year. This performance stands out against a fragile international backdrop characterized by trade fragmentation and financial vulnerabilities. However, analyzing the internal components of this growth reveals a nuanced economic reality - a distinct divergence between aggregate production metrics and everyday household purchasing power.

K-Shaped Consumption Dynamics

Aggregate GDP expansion can sometimes mask structural imbalances within the consumer economy. The post-pandemic recovery has exhibited a clear "K-shaped" trajectory. The upper tier of the consumer pyramid is experiencing significant wealth appreciation, driven by equity market gains, premium corporate compensation, and tech-sector realignments. This trend is visible in the booming sales of premium real estate, luxury sports utility vehicles, and high-end discretionary services.

The Real Wage Equation

The core explanation for this divergence lies in the relationship between nominal wage increases and the specific inflation profile of everyday essentials. When headline inflation sits at a seemingly manageable 3.93 percent, it is calculated across a broad national basket of goods. However, for households that spend a large percentage of their income on food, transport, and utilities, the practical cost increase feels much higher.

When nominal entry-level salaries in major sectors remain relatively flat while daily expenses rise, real consumer purchasing power faces downward pressure. This dynamic dampens overall domestic demand, even as high-end luxury segments set new sales records.

The Silent Tax: Erosion of savings culture and asset realignment

India's high domestic savings rate has long been a key macroeconomic strength, providing stable, non-inflationary capital to fund public infrastructure and corporate investments.

Historically, households' favored safe, predictable assets like bank fixed deposits, public provident funds, and sovereign small savings schemes.

However, persistent structural inflation is changing this traditional approach to financial security.

The Real Interest Rate Deficit:

When the nominal interest rate on a standard multi-year bank deposit sits around 6.5 to 7 percent, and core consumer price pressures on essential items run close to that range, the real financial return for the saver approaches zero.

For retirees and fixed-income households who rely on interest payouts to cover their monthly living costs, this environment creates a clear financial challenge.

- **The Growth of Retail Mutual Funds:** Monthly inflows into Systematic Investment Plans (SIPs) have reached historic highs, driven by individuals seeking returns that can outperform inflation.
- **Increased Risk Exposure:** While this shift channels capital into corporate enterprises, it also exposes middle-class household savings to broader equity market volatility and correction risks.
- **Real Estate and Alternative Assets:** Wealthier households are shifting their capital back into physical assets like premium real estate and gold jewelry, looking for a tangible hedge against long-term monetary depreciation.

Rural vs Urban India: The divergent burden of price shocks

The impact of rising costs is not felt uniformly across India's geographic regions. Rural and urban communities experience inflation differently due to distinct variations in spending patterns, income stability, and overall economic resilience. Recent data reveals that rural areas often face more persistent price pressures than their urban counterparts.

Consumption Basket Structural Differences

The primary reason rural households are more vulnerable to inflation lies in the composition of their consumption basket. In rural areas, food items carry a much higher weight in the local consumer price index. Consequently, any spike in agricultural prices caused by weather shocks impacts a rural family's budget much faster and more directly than an urban one.

Additionally, rural distribution networks face higher logistics costs per unit. Essential manufactured goods, personal care items, and processed foods travel through multiple layers of wholesale intermediaries and transport links, adding a premium to final retail prices in remote villages.

Technology as a structural buoy: Can digital India fight inflation?

Amid these persistent cost challenges, India's rapidly expanding public digital infrastructure has emerged as a major tool for improving economic efficiency. The deployment of open-access digital platforms has fundamentally changed retail commerce, helping to lower consumer costs by streamlining transactions and removing market friction.

The Transactional Efficiency of UPI

The widespread adoption of the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) has removed significant transactional friction from the retail economy. By enabling instant, fee-free digital cash transfers across a vast network of street vendors, micro-merchants, and large distributors, UPI has drastically lowered the cost of handling cash. For small business owners, this instant settlement system improves daily working capital cycles, reducing their reliance on expensive, short-term informal credit to fund daily operations.

DIRECT MARKET ACCESS PLATFORMS

- **Reducing Intermediary Layers:** These digital platforms allow regional farmer collectives to connect directly with urban retail brands and bulk commercial buyers.
- **Transparent Price Discovery:** By bypassing traditional wholesale brokers who often take substantial margins, these systems ensure farmers receive better prices for their crops while lowering retail costs for urban consumers.
- **Predictive Supply Routing:** Algorithms track demand across different urban markets, helping to route perishable food shipments more efficiently, reduce market gluts, and minimize overall product waste.

The Employment-Inflation Puzzle: The Struggle for Productive Wages

The long-term impact of inflation on a society depends heavily on the strength of its labor market. If living costs rise while the economy generates a steady supply of high-quality, productive jobs with matching wage growth, households can maintain their living standards. However, when price increases happen alongside structural shifts in employment, the risk of household financial strain increases.

The Informal Employment Challenge

While India's headline unemployment numbers appear stable, a deeper look reveals a significant structural trend: a large share of job growth is concentrated in informal sectors, contractual roles, and on-demand gig platforms. These employment models offer vital flexibility and immediate income, but they typically lack regular cost-of-living salary adjustments, institutional pensions, or comprehensive medical benefits. As a result, gig workers and informal laborers face direct exposure to price volatility. A sudden spike in daily food or fuel costs requires them to work longer hours just to maintain their real earnings.

The Skills and Compensation Mismatch

Slowing Entry-Level Demand: As companies increasingly deploy advanced automation and digital agents for routine analytical, coding, and administrative tasks, hiring for traditional white-collar roles has cooled.

Wage Polarization: Compensation growth has become highly concentrated among specialized professionals with expertise in complex domains like systems architecture or advanced data sciences.

The Salaried Squeeze: For the broader segment of standard white-collar professionals, salary increments have leveled off.

This makes it increasingly difficult to absorb the rising costs of premium urban housing and private services.

Global Crises, Local Markets: The asymmetric transmission channels

No modern economy stands entirely apart from global markets. Despite India's strong domestic focus, the country remains integrated with international trade networks, global financial systems, and cross-border energy corridors. Consequently, geopolitical tensions and supply shocks in distant corners of the world can quickly impact consumer prices at local markets.

The Hydrocarbon Import Vulnerability

The primary channel through which global shocks reach the Indian consumer is crude oil and natural gas imports. India imports over 80 percent of its petroleum needs. When geopolitical conflicts flare up in West Asia or shipping lanes face disruptions in vital maritime corridors, global crude benchmarks spike instantly. While the state can temporarily cushion these spikes by adjusting fuel taxes or diversifying its crude sources.

Australia shock Turkey 2-0 as Popovic's gamble delivers World Cup win

VANCOUVER

Australia produced one of the biggest upsets of the FIFA World Cup so far, defeating Turkey 2-0 in their Group D opener at BC Place Stadium as coach Tony Popovic's bold team selection paid off handsomely.

Goals from Nestory Irankunda and Connor Metcalfe, coupled with a stellar goalkeeping display by rookie Patrick Beach, secured a memorable victory for the Socceroos against a highly fancied Turkish side.

Popovic raised eyebrows before kick-off by dropping experienced captain and goalkeeper Maty Ryan in favour of Beach, who was making only his third international appearance. Vice-captain Jackson Irvine was also left out, with 21-year-old midfielder Paul Okon-Engstler handed a starting role in a team featuring 10 World Cup debutants.

The gamble proved inspired as Australia absorbed sustained Turkish pressure and struck decisively when opportunities arose.

Turkey, appearing at their first World Cup since their remarkable third-place finish in 2002, dominated possession and created several chances but found Beach in inspired form. The young goalkeeper made a string of outstanding saves, denying Turkey's attacking stars time and again.

One of the visitors' best opportunities came in the 27th minute when Arda Guler unleashed a powerful effort that Beach expertly pushed away.

Moments later, Australia broke the deadlock. Beach initiated the move with a long pass to Okon-Engstler, whose precise ball over the top split the Turkish defence. Irankunda controlled brilliantly before finishing calmly to give Australia the lead.

Turkey nearly responded immediately when Abdulkerim Bardakci fired a thunderous long-range strike goalward, but Beach managed to get a fingertip to the ball and divert it onto the post.

Debutants shine brilliantly while Beach stars with crucial saves throughout.

The Australians sealed victory in the 75th minute when Metcalfe surged forward from midfield and unleashed a powerful strike from 25 yards that found the net.

The result leaves Australia level on three points with the United States men's national soccer team at the top of Group D.

The two sides will meet in Seattle on Friday in a match that could prove decisive in the race for qualification to the knockout stage.

Indian sprinters chase historic sub-10 barrier after record-breaking surge

BENGALURU

Indian athletics is on the verge of a historic milestone as a talented crop of sprinters closes in on becoming the nation's first athlete to break the coveted 10-second barrier in the men's 100 metres.

The remarkable progress has been driven by a new generation of runners led by Gurindervir Singh, Animesh Kujur, Amlan Borgohain and Manikanta Hoblidhar, whose performances have transformed perceptions about Indian sprinting.

The biggest breakthrough came at the Federation Cup in Ranchi last month, where Gurindervir clocked a sensational national record of 10.09 seconds. In a dramatic 24-hour period, the national mark changed hands multiple times between Gurindervir and training partner Animesh, underlining the rapid rise of Indian sprinting standards.

The achievement marked a major leap for a country that took nearly two decades to progress from its first sub-10.30 performance to the 10.20 range. The jump to 10.09 has fuelled hopes that a sub-10 second run could soon become reality.

Jamaican sprint star Oblique Seville, who has trained alongside Indian athletes in the past, believes the breakthrough is within reach.

"I have trained with Indian runners before, and what stood out was their discipline and willingness to trust the process. Once one athlete breaks through, others can follow," Seville observed.

Much of the recent success has been linked to the high-performance programme led by coach James Hillier under the Reliance Foundation. The system has helped athletes improve through scientific training, nutrition, recovery management and international-standard coaching.

The programme has already produced notable success stories, including hurdler Jyothi Yarraji and national record holder Tejas Shirse.

McGinn fires Scotland past Haiti in winning World Cup return

FOXBOROUGH

John McGinn scored the decisive goal as Scotland marked their return to the FIFA World Cup after a 28-year absence with a hard-fought 1-0 victory over Haiti in their Group C opener at Gillette Stadium.

Backed by tens of thousands of travelling supporters, Scotland earned their first World Cup victory in 36 years and moved to the top of Group C, keeping alive hopes of reaching the knockout stages for the first time in the nation's history.

The match was far from straightforward for Steve Clarke's side, who had to withstand a spirited challenge from the Caribbean underdogs before securing all three points.

Scotland nearly took the lead in the 17th minute when Scott McTominay struck the post with a powerful effort after being set up by Ben Doak.

The breakthrough finally arrived on 28 minutes. A move initiated by Che Adams stretched the Haitian defence before Doak delivered a dangerous ball into the area. McGinn pounced on the loose ball and his effort took a deflection off Jean-Ricner Bellegarde before finding the back of the net.

The goal sparked jubilant celebrations among the capacity crowd, dominated by Scottish fans who had travelled in large numbers to witness their nation's first World Cup appearance since 1998.

Despite taking the lead, Scotland were unable to put the game beyond reach. Haiti gradually gained confidence and pushed forward in search of an equaliser. The Caribbean side, ranked 84th in the world, displayed admirable determination and threatened on several occasions.

Winger Ruben Providence caused problems with his pace, while striker Frantzdy Pierrot came agonisingly close to levelling the scores five minutes from time when his towering header drifted narrowly wide.

Scotland held firm to preserve the lead and claim a crucial victory. The result leaves them well placed ahead of tougher Group C encounters against Morocco national football team and Brazil national football team.

With Morocco and Brazil drawing 1-1 in the group's other match, Scotland's winning start could prove pivotal in their bid to make history by advancing beyond the World Cup group stage for the first time.

VINÍCIUS RESCUES BRAZIL IN HARD-FOUGHT DRAW AGAINST MOROCCO

EAST RUTHERFORD

Vinícius Júnior scored a crucial equaliser as Brazil battled back from an early setback to secure a 1-1 draw against Morocco in a high-intensity Group C clash at the FIFA World Cup.

The five-time world champions were under pressure for long periods and were fortunate to come away with a point after an impressive display by Morocco, who dominated much of the opening half-hour at MetLife Stadium.

Morocco, semifinalists at the previous World Cup, began confidently and created numerous opportunities against a nervous Brazilian side. Their bright start was rewarded in the 21st minute when Ismael Saibari produced a composed finish after a swift attacking move sliced through Brazil's defence.

The goal came after a midfield turnover allowed Morocco to launch a rapid counter-attack. A perfectly weighted through ball split the Brazilian backline and Saibari calmly chipped the advancing Alisson Becker to give the North Africans a deserved lead.

Brazil struggled to settle early, with coach Carlo Ancelotti later admitting his team looked anxious and unbalanced.

"The team was a bit anxious at the beginning. Nerves were all over the place," Ancelotti said after the match.

The South Americans eventually found their rhythm and levelled in the 32nd minute through Vinícius Júnior. The Real Madrid star combined neatly with Bruno Guimarães before cutting inside and firing a powerful right-footed effort beyond goalkeeper Yassine Bounou.

The strike was Vinícius' 10th international goal and lifted the spirits of the largely Brazilian crowd among the 80,000-plus spectators.

The second half remained fiercely contested, with Morocco continuing to threaten. Captain Achraf Hakimi led by example as the Atlas Lions pushed for a winner, while Brazil searched for moments of individual brilliance.

Morocco nearly snatched victory deep into stoppage time, but Alisson produced a remarkable double save to preserve the draw.

The result extends Brazil's unbeaten run in World Cup opening matches and leaves Group C finely balanced. Brazil next face Haiti in Philadelphia, while Morocco take on Scotland as both teams continue their quest for a place in the knockout stages.

Dhiraj, Kumkum upset South Korea to win World Cup recurve gold

ANTALYA

India's Dhiraj Bommadevara and teenage sensation Kumkum Mohod produced a stunning performance to defeat reigning Olympic champions South Korea and capture the recurve mixed team gold medal at the Archery World Cup Stage 3 in Antalya on Sunday.

The Indian pair outclassed South Korea's Oh Ye-jin and Kim Je-deok 5-1 (37-36, 37-36, 39-39) in a high-quality final, showcasing remarkable composure against one of the strongest teams in world archery.

Dhiraj, 24, and 17-year-old Kumkum held their nerve throughout the contest, edging the opening two sets by the narrowest of margins before drawing the third set to seal a memorable victory.

The defining moment came in the closing stages when Olympian Dhiraj displayed exceptional temperament under pressure. Needing strong finishes to keep India ahead, he delivered two perfect 10s with his final arrows, effectively shutting the door on the South Korean challenge.

The triumph marked the first Archery World Cup mixed team gold medal for both Dhiraj and Kumkum and underlined India's growing strength in recurve archery on the international stage.

Neeraj named in CWG squad, awaits qualification mark

NEW DELHI

Two-time Olympic medallist Neeraj Chopra was on Sunday included in India's 32-member athletics squad for the Commonwealth Games, subject to meeting the Athletics Federation of India's qualification standard in upcoming competitions. The Commonwealth Games will be held in Glasgow, Scotland, from July 23 to August 2. Chopra, who has been recovering from a back injury since the 2025 World Championships, is expected to return to competition within the next 10 days. To confirm his place in the final squad, the former world champion must achieve the AFI qualifying mark of 82.61 metres. The squad also features top athletes including Gurindervir Singh, Animesh Kujur, Gulveer Singh, Tejaswin Shankar and Parul Chaudhary. AFI selection committee chairman Adille Sumariwalla said Chopra has regained fitness and is preparing for a competitive comeback. Rohit Yadav and Yashvir Singh have also been selected in the men's javelin event, while triple jumper Selva Prabhu must prove his form at the Inter-State Championships before his berth is confirmed. India will field a strong athletics contingent in Glasgow.

Shirse shatters national record; Yadav faces CWG heartbreak

LUDHIANA

Tejas Shirse delivered a career-defining performance by breaking his own men's 110m hurdles national record at the Indian Athletics Series 9, while javelin thrower Sachin Yadav appears set to miss the upcoming Commonwealth Games after failing to achieve the qualifying standard.

Representing the Reliance Foundation, the 24-year-old Shirse clocked a stunning 13.27 seconds to eclipse his previous national record of 13.41 seconds set in 2024. The remarkable effort also placed him sixth on the Asian season rankings and comfortably inside the Athletics Federation of India's Commonwealth Games qualifying mark of 13.39 seconds.

The record-breaking run marked a significant improvement from the 13.50 seconds he recorded while winning gold at the Federation Cup in Ranchi last month.

Reflecting on his performance, Shirse said a change in mindset helped him deliver his best race.

"After missing the CWG qualification in Ranchi and Taiwan despite finishing on the podium, I treated this race like a free hit. I competed without pressure and let my legs do the talking," he said.

His coach, James Hillier, praised the hurdler's dedication and resilience, particularly after overcoming an injury earlier this year.

"His training performances suggested a breakthrough was coming. He has worked extremely hard and deserves this success," Hillier said.

While Shirse celebrated a major milestone, the day brought disappointment for World Championships finalist Sachin Yadav. The 26-year-old javelin thrower skipped the competition, effectively ending his hopes of securing Commonwealth Games qualification.

Yadav needed to surpass the AFI's qualifying mark of 82.61 metres but failed to do so during the qualification period.

His best throw this season remains 81.95m, achieved at the Indian Athletics Series 3 in New Delhi in April.

The athlete, who finished fourth at the World Championships in Tokyo last year, has endured a difficult season.

He managed only 79.07m at the Federation Cup and followed it with a below-par 79.18m on his Diamond League debut in Rome earlier this month.In the javelin event.

Football fans await star-studded encounter featuring former international greats soon.

Brazil Legends to face Indian All Stars in Kochi exhibition clash

KOCHI

Football enthusiasts in Kerala are set for a memorable spectacle later this year as Brazil Legends take on Indian All Stars in a high-profile exhibition match at the Jawaharlal Nehru International Stadium in Kochi on September 20.

The much-anticipated contest was officially unveiled with the launch of the match ticket at a special function in Kochi, generating excitement among football fans across the state.Organisers have promised a star-studded event featuring some of the biggest names associated with Brazilian football. The Brazil Legends squad is expected to include several former internationals, including members of Brazil's victorious 2002 FIFA World Cup-winning team.

Among the global icons likely to headline the visiting side are Ronaldinho and Rivaldo, two of the most celebrated figures in world football. Their expected participation has already generated considerable buzz among supporters eager to witness legendary players in action.

The Indian All Stars team will feature a collection of former national team players who played key roles in Indian football over the years. The squad is set to include iconic striker I. M. Vijayan, former forward C. K. Vineeth, midfield veteran Jo Paul Ancheri and experienced campaigner K. T. Chacko.

The exhibition match is expected to attract thousands of spectators to the stadium, which has hosted several major sporting events over the years. For football-crazy Kerala, the opportunity to watch former World Cup winners and Indian football legends share the same pitch is being viewed as a unique occasion.

Apart from providing entertainment, the event is also expected to celebrate the enduring popularity of football in the state, where the sport enjoys a passionate following. Organisers believe the presence of globally recognised names will inspire young footballers and further strengthen interest in the game.

Gill says Rohit brushed off run-out as India thrash Afghanistan

DHARAMSALA

India captain Shubman Gill revealed that Rohit Sharma took his unfortunate run-out in stride after watching the replay, as the hosts registered a comprehensive victory over Afghanistan in the rain-curtailed first ODI in Dharamsala.

Gill, who remained unbeaten on 84 and led India to a comfortable chase of 195, said there were no hard feelings over the mix-up that resulted in Rohit's dismissal. The former captain was run out following a misunderstanding between the two batters, compounded by the bowler crossing Rohit's path while chasing the ball.

"Rohit saw the replay and said it's fine about the run-out," Gill said after the match, putting to rest any concerns over the incident.

India skipper hails debutants, reveals Rohit's reaction after unfortunate dismissal.

The Indian skipper was full of praise for debutants Gurnoor Brar and Harsh Dubey, whose performances played a key role in restricting Afghanistan. Fast bowler Brar impressed with his pace, swing and accuracy, returning figures of 3 for 27, while left-arm spinner Dubey recovered from an expensive first over to finish with 3 for 47.

"Gurnoor's pace, consistent lengths and swing were impressive. Harsh went for 16 in his first over but still kept tossing the ball up, which was very impressive," Gill said.

Gill also highlighted the importance of perseverance and credited practice after taking a spectacular airborne catch in the slips to dismiss AM Ghazanfar.

"I have practised slip catches a lot.

I was telling my fielding coach that I hadn't taken any brilliant catch and I'm happy to have taken one," he said with a smile.

Reflecting on the contest, Gill described it as a T20-style game after rain reduced the match to 25 overs per side.

He praised Afghanistan opener Rahmanullah Gurbaz, whose explosive 102 off 51 balls powered his team's innings.

"Gurbaz was brilliant, but the way we bowled in the second half was outstanding," Gill noted.

Afghanistan captain Hashmatullah Shahidi felt his side fell 30 to 40 runs short of a competitive total and admitted that losing wickets in clusters ultimately cost them the match. India now lead the ODI series 1-0.

Campbelle's unbeaten 90 guides WI to thrilling win over New Zealand

SOUTHAMPTON

Shemaine Campbelle produced one of the finest innings of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026, smashing an unbeaten 90 to steer West Indies to a thrilling seven-wicket victory over New Zealand in a Group 2 clash at Southampton.

In a contest that went down to the penultimate delivery, West Indies successfully chased a challenging target of 163, reaching 163/3 with one ball remaining to secure a crucial victory and strengthen their position in the tournament.Earlier, New Zealand posted a competitive 162/6 after being put into bat. Wicketkeeper-batter Isabella Gaze provided a brisk start with 35 off 29 balls, helping the White Ferns race to 49/1 during the powerplay.

However, the momentum shifted when West Indies pacer Aaliyah Alleyne delivered a match-defining spell. The seamer claimed 4/27 from her four overs, removing key batters and preventing New Zealand from fully capitalising on a strong platform.

The middle order responded through Brooke Halliday, who scored a composed 44, while Maddy Green remained unbeaten on 35 off 22 balls to push the total beyond 160. New Zealand captain Melie Kerr, however, endured a disappointing outing, managing just five runs.

West Indies' chase began cautiously after the early loss of Qiana Joseph, but captain Hayley Matthews and Campbelle rebuilt the innings with a vital partnership.

Rahul's 19-ball blitz stuns head coach Gautam Gambhir

DHARAMSALA

KL Rahul made a powerful statement on his return to a shortened-format role, smashing a whirlwind 39 off just 19 balls to help India cruise to victory over Afghanistan in the rain-curtailed first ODI in Dharamsala.

With the match reduced to 25 overs per side, Rahul seized the opportunity to display his aggressive side, leaving India head coach Gautam Gambhir visibly impressed. The stylish batter struck four boundaries and three towering sixes during his brief but impactful stay at the crease, helping India chase down the target of 195 with more than two overs to spare.

One of Rahul's towering sixes particularly caught Gambhir's attention, with television cameras capturing the coach's reaction from the dressing room. The moment quickly became a talking point among fans, highlighting Rahul's ability to adapt his game to different formats.

Rahul, a key member of India's ODI setup, has often faced scrutiny regarding his strike rate in shorter formats. However, his fearless approach against Afghanistan demonstrated the progress he has made in developing a more attacking style of play.

India captain Shubman Gill, who anchored the chase with an unbeaten 84, praised the team's overall performance after Afghanistan threatened to post a much bigger total through Rahmanullah Gurbaz's explosive century.

"The way we started, they pulled the game away from us. Gurbaz was brilliant and took the game away from us, but we fought back well," Gill said after the match.

Gill also lauded the efforts of India's bowlers, particularly debutant pacer Gurnoor Brar and left-arm spinner Harsh Dubey. Brar impressed with the new ball and at the death, while Dubey bounced back strongly after conceding 16 runs in his opening over.

The skipper underlined the significance of middle overs in one-day cricket, stressing the importance of maintaining pressure with the ball and rotating the strike efficiently while batting.

Afghanistan captain Hashmatullah Shahidi admitted his side fell short of a competitive total despite Gurbaz's brilliant innings. With a 1-0 lead in the series, India will look to maintain momentum in the second ODI, buoyed by Rahul's explosive return and a clinical all-round display.

Explosive cameo showcases Rahul's T20 credentials in rain-hit ODI victory.

Former opener says youngster has proven ability across formats already consistently.

Sehwag backs Jaiswal for all-format role despite white-ball competition

NEW DELHI

Former India opener Virender Sehwag has thrown his weight behind Yashasvi Jaiswal, backing the young batter to become a regular across all three formats for India despite stiff competition for places in the white-ball teams.

Jaiswal has established himself as a key member of India's Test side, opening alongside KL Rahul and delivering a string of impressive performances. However, opportunities in One-Day Internationals and T20 Internationals have been limited due to the presence of established stars and a crowded pool of opening batters.

Sehwag said he firmly believes Jaiswal possesses the skills and temperament required to succeed in all formats of the game.

"I would definitely like to see Jaiswal in ODIs and T20Is — I mean in all three formats. He is a player who can play all three formats," Sehwag said.

The former swashbuckling opener acknowledged that breaking into India's current ODI setup remains a challenge. With captain Shubman Gill and veteran Rohit Sharma occupying the opening slots, Jaiswal has found chances hard to come by.

Sehwag, however, feels the situation could change in the near future.

"There is no space right now. Shubman Gill is the captain and Rohit Sharma is playing. As soon as Rohit retires, you will see Jaiswal playing white-ball and one-day cricket as well," he remarked.

Jaiswal's limited ODI opportunities have nevertheless yielded encouraging returns. In four ODI appearances, the left-hander has amassed 171 runs at an impressive average of 57, including an unbeaten century. Sehwag pointed out that Jaiswal has never been dropped due to poor performances but has largely missed out because of team combinations and the availability of senior players.

"He performed very well when he got the chance," Sehwag noted.

The former opener also highlighted competition from players such as Ruturaj Gaikwad and Ishan Kishan, both of whom remain in contention for white-ball spots.

Interestingly, both Jaiswal and Kishan have been included in India's squad for the ongoing ODI series against Afghanistan, giving them another opportunity to stake their claim for a permanent place in the national side.

BCB backs Nayeem Hasan, seeks probe into alleged police assault

CHATTOGRAM

The Bangladesh Cricket Board has expressed deep concern and pledged full support to national team spinner Nayeem Hasan after he alleged that he was harassed and physically assaulted by local police officers in Chattogram while returning home following his domestic cricket commitments.

The incident, which reportedly took place near the Lalkhan Bazar area, has sparked widespread discussion within Bangladesh's cricket fraternity and prompted a swift response from the country's cricket governing body.In an official statement, the BCB strongly condemned the alleged treatment meted out to the 25-year-old off-spinner and called for a fair and impartial investigation into the matter."The Bangladesh Cricket Board expresses its deep concern regarding the reported incident involving harassment and abuse of Bangladesh national team cricketer Nayeem Hasan by some law-enforcing agency members in Chattogram," the board said.

The BCB added that such conduct towards a national athlete was unacceptable and warranted immediate attention.

Gurbaz credits Gambhir's advice after blazing century against India

DHARAMSALA

Afghanistan opener Rahmanullah Gurbaz has credited India head coach Gautam Gambhir for helping him fine-tune his batting after smashing a breathtaking 51-ball century against India in the opening ODI at the HPCA Stadium.

Gurbaz lit up the rain-curtailed 25-over contest with a sensational 102 off just 51 deliveries, hammering eight sixes and eight fours to register his ninth ODI hundred. Despite his heroic effort, Afghanistan were bowled out for 194 in 24.5 overs as India secured a comfortable victory.

The right-handed opener revealed that a conversation with Gambhir following Afghanistan's heavy defeat in the one-off Test at Mullanpur had a significant impact on his approach.

"After the Test match, I had a very good conversation with Gautam Gambhir sir and that discussion really helped me," Gurbaz said after the match.

Afghanistan opener says technical guidance helped improve shot selection significantly.

The Afghanistan batter, who previously played under Gambhir's mentorship during his stint with the Kolkata Knight Riders, said he sought advice on improving his shot selection.

"When the Test match ended, I told him that I wanted to improve my shot selection. He shared some positive ideas and I was able to apply them today," Gurbaz explained.

The opener said he worked on those suggestions extensively in the nets and was pleased to see the results translate into match performance.

"I just tried to play positively and it worked for me. I'm very grateful for the guidance," he added.

Gurbaz said representing Afghanistan continues to be his biggest motivation and described his century against India in India as a special achievement.

"It's always nice to do something for your country and make everyone proud. I trust my training and preparation, and this innings is the result of that hard work," he said.

Reflecting on the conditions, Gurbaz noted that the surface offered assistance to spin bowlers despite being good for stroke play against pace.

"There was some turn and assistance for the spinners. If they bowl well, they can make an impact," he observed.

Although Afghanistan suffered defeat, Gurbaz's explosive knock stood out as one of the finest innings by an Afghan batter against India and provided a rare bright spot for the visitors in Dharamsala.

Wareham stars as Australia crush South Africa in World Cup opener

MANCHESTER

Georgia Wareham delivered a superb all-round display as Australia began their ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026 campaign in dominant fashion, defeating South Africa by 65 runs in a Group 1 encounter at Old Trafford.

The defending champions overcame an early batting wobble to post a formidable 172/8 before bundling out South Africa for just 107 in 16.4 overs, thanks largely to Wareham's match-winning contributions with both bat and ball.

Australia's innings got off to a shaky start after losing opener Georgia Voll for a duck and Beth Mooney for seven, leaving them reeling at 24/2.

However, Phoebe Litchfield counterattacked brilliantly to wrest back momentum. The left-hander smashed a scintillating 50 off just 24 balls, striking nine boundaries and a six at a remarkable strike rate of over 200. Her aggressive approach ensured Australia crossed the 50-run mark within the powerplay.

Litchfield received valuable support from veteran Ellyse Perry, who contributed a composed 36 off 26 balls. Once Litchfield departed, Wareham maintained the momentum with a lively 32 off 22 deliveries, featuring six boundaries.

Late cameos from Annabel Sutherland and Nicola Carey helped Australia finish strongly despite disciplined spells from South African bowlers Nonkululeko Mlaba and Nadine de Klerk.

South Africa's chase never gained momentum. Stand-in Australian captain Sophie Molineux struck early, while Kim Garth removed another top-order batter to leave the Proteas struggling at 7/2.

Captain Laura Wolvaardt fought hard with a top score of 44, and de Klerk added a quick 25, but Wareham turned the match decisively in Australia's favour. She dismissed de Klerk, contributed to the run-out of Marizanne Kapp and then swept through the lower order.

Wareham finished with outstanding figures of 3/13, while Alana King chipped in with 2/26. The emphatic victory gives Australia an ideal start to their World Cup campaign and underlines their status as one of the tournament favourites.

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